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BY

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"DIET IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH"

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PREFACE

WHEN accompanying my husband on a tour through Burma in the spring of 1895, I had no intention whatever of writing a book on the people and country. We paid our visit solely in the pursuit of health and enjoyment. I embodied my impressions in some articles published in the *Cornhill Magazine*, the *Queen*, the *Saturday Review*, the *Album*, and the *Hospital*, fragments of which papers are intercalated in the text. It was not until some time after my return that, finding how little was known at home of the beautiful country and interesting people of Burma, I undertook the task of writing a book on the subject. In carrying out this agreeable but rather onerous work, I must acknowledge my indebtedness to the authors included in the "list of books consulted," but more especially to Shway Yoe (Mr. Scott), for his encyclopædic work, "The Burman;" to Yule's "Mission to Ava;" to Bishop Bigandet's "Life of Gautauma," and to Phayre's "History of Burma."

"Picturesque Burma" is illustrated chiefly from photographs, which were taken by Signor Beato and Mr. Johannis of Mandalay, and by Messrs. Bourne & Shepherd of Calcutta. Mr. Philip Miller has kindly made some drawings. To Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co. I am indebted for permission to use the illustrations of the temples of Pagahn; and to Miss Hart I have to express my obligations for reading the proof-sheets.

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BOOK I

THE COUNTRY OF BURMA

PICTURESQUE BURMA

PAST AND PRESENT

INTRODUCTION

BURMA is to the traveller a land of delight, a country where gaiety is natural to the people, *insouciance* is congenial to the soil, and colour is born of the sunshine. To every taste Burma affords subjects of unfailing interest; to the historian it offers attractive researches on the origin of ancient nations and the stone records of buried cities founded by Aryan and Mongolian emigrants in the remote past; to the ethnologist it suggests inquiries into the characteristics of races differing so widely as the Shans from the Talaings, and the Chins from the Karens; and to the philosopher it shows the spectacle of an atheistic people deeply imbued with the spirit of a lofty ethical religion. To the antiquarian, the investigation of its ruined pagodas, temples, and palaces promises the charm of discovery, and will perhaps throw light on the influence of Babylon in the far East; to the botanist its forests yield the pleasures of inexhaustible study, and to the sportsman the opportunity of hunting such big game as the tiger, the elephant, and the rhinoceros; while to the artist the harmonious "composition" of the scenery of river, forest, and mountain, the picturesqueness of the flower-clad people, and the splendour of the colouring

of sky and land, afford that sense of satisfaction known to him whose eyes are the windows of a soul that rejoices in beauty.

Burma is so little known to tourists that, after my husband and I had travelled from Rangoon to Bhamo, and up and down the reaches of the noble Irrawaddy river, after we had revelled in the natural beauties of the country, gloried in the sunshine, wondered at the pagodas, and studied the history and the people of Burma, I came to believe that a fresh account and a pictorial representation of this interesting land would not be unacceptable to the English public. In the following pages I have attempted to present to my readers concisely, and yet as fully as the largeness of the subject will admit within the prescribed limits, a sketch of the cities, the people and their customs, the religion, the history, the resources and the future of Burma, while also relating personal incidents of travel and giving the impressions of the moment. If I succeed in arousing interest in a little known land and people, now subject to British rule, and in inducing others to visit this beautiful and unique country, my object will have been gained.

In order to have a clear understanding of Burma, and of the past struggles and present condition of the races who inhabit the valley of the Irrawaddy, it is necessary to have a definite conception of the geographical features of the country. A glance at the accompanying map will show that on the extreme north of Burma there is a continuation of the snowy Himalayas, extending from the northern borders of Assam towards the great continent of China. These mountains send southwards three principal spurs; the Arakan mountains, which divide Arakan from Burma proper, and are inhabited by the wild Chins; the range which extends between the valleys of the Irrawaddy and the Sitang, and another range between the Sitang and the Salwen rivers.

Running for over a thousand miles throughout the whole

MAP OF BURMA

Bhutan
Hill Tribes
Luckimpore
Sibsagar
Kutchbehar
ASSAM
Goalpara
Gowhatty
Jynteah Hills
Cossyah Hills
Naga Hills
Munipore
Silchar
Kachar
BENGAL
Cachar
Jynteah
Tipperah
Hill Tipperah
Chittagong
Mouths of the Ganges
Elephant Pt.
Shapuri I.
St. Martins I.
Akyab
Combermere B.
Kyouk pyu
Ramri I.
Sandoway
Foul I.
Bluff Pt.
BAY OF BENGAL
PEGU
IRAWADI
Rangoon
Thongwa
Bassein
Mouths of the Irawadi
Preparis North Chan.
Preparis I.
Preparis South Channel
Little Coco
Great Coco I.
Coco Channel
Landfall I.
North Andaman
Port Cornwallis
Narcondam I.
Interview I.
Sound I.
Mid Andaman
ANDAMAN
Barren I. (Volcano)
Mercy Lawrence I.
Baratang I.
South Andaman
Port Blair
ISLANDS
N. Sentinel
Hutland I.
Duncan Passage
S. Sentinel
Little Andaman
Longitude East 96° of Greenwich
English Miles
0 40 80 120 160 200
SE-CHUEN
Kachin
Tsiang
Lissu
Singpho
Mishmi Hills
Mishmi
Taron
Irrawaddy R.
Bamo
Momeit
Mogoung
Kamaing
Tagaung
Shwebo
Mandalay
Sagaing
Amarapura
Ava
Myadoung
Myinkaba
Yandabo
Pagan
Meiktila
Yamethin
Minbu
Magwe
Yenangyaung
Prome
Tharawaddy
Henzada
Bassein
Myaungmya
Maubin
Rangoon R.
Martaban
Gulf of Martaban
Kalegauk I.
Tenasserim
Elphinstone I.
Mergui
Archipelago
Tavoy
Tavoy R.
Tavoy I.
Cabocosa
Tenasserim
King I.
Elphinstone I.
Mergui
Archipelago
Bankok
Ayuthia
Korat
Lakhon
Raheng
Pakpai
Chantabun
Koh Chang
Koh Kut
Bangtapan
Paktlin
GULF OF SIAM
SIAM
Mainglon
Kiang Hung
Kiang Rhong
Kiang Tung
Kiang Khaing
Kiang Tsen
Kiang Lem
Kiang Hai
Kiang Sai
Kiang Kheng
Kiang Rhun
Kiang Khong
Kiang Hung
Kiang Tsung
Kiang Tung
Kiang Khaing
Kiang Tsen
Kiang Lem
Kiang Hai
Kiang Sai
Kiang Kheng
Kiang Rhun
Kiang Khong
Mainglon
Mainglong
Mainglaing
Mainglat
Mainglone
Mainglaing
Mainglat
Mainglone
Mainglaing
Mainglat
Mainglone

length of Burma is the great waterway of the Irrawaddy, which takes its rise in the snow mountains of the Langtang branch of the Himalayas. About midway in its course it is joined by the Chindwin, which passes through Manipur. In the delta of the Irrawaddy the river opens by a number of mouths into the Bay of Bengal. These estuaries form natural harbours of great commercial value. The Sitang flows through the Toungа country, between ranges of mountains occupied from the earliest times by the tribes of the Karens. The Salwen, which is almost as long as the Irrawaddy, is not navigable, owing to rapids and waterfalls. At its mouth was situated the old port of Martaban.

To the north-east of Burma, China approaches her borders by the province of Yunnan. Across the mountains which separate Yunnan from Bhamo are the trade routes by which gold and silk enter Burma. On the north are the mountainous districts which owned the sway of the Shan chiefs, and to the north-west are Assam, Kachar, and Manipur, whose kings were tributary from time to time to Burma by the fortunes of war.

The coast-line of Arakan and the port of Bassein were known at an early date to emigrants from India and Portugal, but the long range of the Arakanese mountains, pierced by passes of great difficulty, protected Burma from incursions from that side. On the east, Burma was bounded by Shan states, those on the north being tributary to Ava, and those on the south tributary to Siam. Tenasserim, the western half of the peninsula stretching towards the Malacca Straits, was subject to the Burmese Empire. It is separated from Siam by a long chain of mountains, dividing the peninsula into two.

We thus see a country, 800 miles from north to south and 400 miles broad, watered throughout its whole length by magnificent rivers, provided by nature with splendid

natural ports, hedged in on the north, east, and west by mountain ranges difficult to cross; a country which produces everything required both for the natural and the civilised man, rice in abundance for food, magnificent timber for building houses and ships, iron for manufactures, precious stones for adornment; where the climate is endurable all the year round, and where life can be passed in ease and without excessive toil; a country which required but a Government engaged in developing the rich resources of the kingdom, and a people willing to work in peace, to have become one of the most splendid and powerful Oriental empires the world has ever seen. But, as the story of Burma told in these pages will reveal, the land was torn by incessant strife; the kings of Burma, not content with a magnificent empire, wastefully squandered the lives of the people and the treasure of the country in foreign wars of mere aggression, and after 2500 years of misgovernment—the dark picture of which is only illumined from time to time by a few figures of true greatness and beneficence—they succeeded in so impoverishing and depopulating their country that it fell an easy victim to the arms of the British Government, whom they had provoked by senseless arrogance, and wilfully insulted beyond what was considered pardonable. In spite, however, of desolating wars, in spite of ferocious kings and tyrannous governors, the people preserved their characteristics, their customs, ideas, and religion, and it is these, combined with its great natural beauty, which make Burma a country of such surpassing interest.

CHAPTER I

THE BURMESE GOLDEN PAGODA AND THE BRITISH CITY OF COMMERCE

THE city of Rangoon was founded by Alompra in 1755, this astute monarch recognising the fact that a port on one of the most navigable mouths of the Irrawaddy, where trade with foreign nations could be encouraged, was one of the best ways of consolidating the newly formed empire of Burma. But for untold centuries before Rangoon was founded the adjoining Thehngoottara Hill had been holy ground, and the Shway Dagohn Pagoda had been a goal for pilgrims for nigh upon 2000 years. It is still the magnet which draws travellers to Rangoon, and the holy fane, "shot upwards like a pyramid of fire," is eagerly watched for as the vessel steams slowly against the strong stream up the muddy river.

To see the great Pagoda and to worship at its numerous shrines is the object of thousands of pilgrims, not only from Upper and Lower Burma, but from the distant Shan Hills, from Siam, from Ceylon, and even from China; for here are said to be enshrined not only eight hairs from the holy head of the god-like Gautauma, but also the staff of Kaukkathan, the water-filter of Gawnagohng, and a portion of the robe of Kathapa, the three Buddhas who preceded Gautauma Buddha. These relics, together with costly offerings of gold and jewels, are not, however, exposed to the gaze of the devout, nor to the sacrilegious hand of the unbeliever; to preserve them for ever, they were, centuries ago, deposited in an underground chamber, which was walled up, and over it has risen the solid and

glittering golden cupola, the work of successive generations of seekers after merit.

The famous Pagoda stands on a mound of earth surrounded by a moat. The lower part of the hill is a fort, the upper has been levelled into a vast paved platform, 900 feet long by 685 feet wide, on which rests the Shway Dagohn and the shrines. The ascent is by four flights of stone stairways looking north, south, east, and west. That on the south is the most frequented, and the entrance to it is guarded by colossal mythical beasts in white plaster. The irregular stone steps are flanked on each side by colonnades of stone and teak pillars, which support many-gabled roofs, handsomely carved and painted.

From a broad base, measuring 1350 square feet, rises the pointed gold cupola of the Pagoda, one solid mass 370 feet, into the sunny air. The tapering point is crowned by a gold htee or umbrella, elaborately wrought and hung with multitudes of gold bells set with jewels. This htee cost £50,000, the money being subscribed by the King, Mindohn Min, and pious Burmans, and was constructed entirely by voluntary labour. The whole Pagoda, from broad base to tapering point, is gilded with pure gold leaf. In the last century Sinbyoo Shin (or Tsheu-byo-yen), king of Burma, gave his weight in gold (12 stone), £9000 in value, to regild the whole Shway Dagohn, a work which was repeated by Mindohn Min in 1871. Humbler offerings are, however, accepted, and it is considered a work of merit to attach gold-leaf to some patch left bare by the rains.

At the four cardinal points are temples or shrines. The splendidly carved roofs are supported by pillars covered with rough but effective glass mosaics, and in the cool shadow there are numerous sitting statues of Gautauma, the passionless and pitying Saviour and Saint of the Buddhists, whose calm and passive face overawes the passion-tossed worshippers at his shrine. On the platform there are also crowds of smaller

ON THE PLATFORM OF THE SHWAY DAGOHN, RANGOON.

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE

shrines, the gifts of the pious; bronze bells, big and small, the sonorous sound of which when struck, gives notice to the Nats, who are the watchful angels of the Burmese, that an act of merit or devotion has been performed; tall wooden poles, silvered or glass mosaicked, surmounted by the Brahminy goose, and bearing streamers on which prayers and praises are written; statues of elephants kneeling in recognition of Gautauma's pitying love for animals, and monster beasts with human faces in memory of the tender love of a lioness who suckled a king's son abandoned in the forest, and whose heart burst with grief when her foster-child forsook her. Around the base of the Pagoda is a forest of models of the cupola, all of which are gilded.

A BURMESE GIRL.

The covered stairway leading to the Pagoda gives a foretaste of the varied and picturesque life of Burma. On the lower flags lepers crouch in their misery, and hold up their mutilated limbs and hideous faces to the passers-by and beg for alms; higher up are booths where gaily dressed women offer flowers, rice, toys, and photographs for sale. A crowd of worshippers, brilliant even in the gloomy shade of the carved roofs, are all day long wending their way up to the holy shrine. Here passes a group of Burmese girls, who in their rainbow-tinted tameins (straight skirts) pinned closely round their shapely hips, clean white jackets, and gay kerchiefs, look like

walking tulips on a sunny day in spring. In their smooth and heavily-coiled black tresses sweet-scented flowers are jauntily stuck: their eyes are laughing, but their mouths are engaged in smoking big green cheroots. A contrast to this happy party is a dying man, who with many moans and groans painfully tries to mount the steep steps; but his legs at last refuse to carry him farther, and he is borne to the shrine in the arms of his friends. Here are Kachins from the north, strong in faith but shy in manner, who have come a long and costly journey from the mountains to make their offerings, and secure a balance of merit in their favour in the long account which is kept by the Nats through countless ages. Troops of shaven monks, "the noble order of the yellow robe," in their toga-like saffron-coloured draperies, are ascending the steps, where Burmans, Shans, Kachins, Chinese, Madrassees, Siamese, and Europeans jostle one another on their way to the wide platform above.

While we were on the platform, and were being shown the sights and having their meanings explained by two learned Burmans, a party of Kachins arrived with a yellow-robed phongyee or monk to make an offering. Having purchased several packets of gold-leaf, to the value of about £2, from one of the treasurers of the Pagoda, three Kachins mounted to the highest ledge of the cupola to stick it on, while their friends watched the process from below; soon, however, anxiety and curiosity got the better of them, and presently the whole party, women included, were seen climbing the fluted ridges of the cupola to make sure that every atom of their offering was used to beautify the great golden Pagoda.

All day long the devout may be seen in the attitude of prayer before one of the statues of Gautauma, repeating in Burmese or in sonorous Pali the great precepts of the law and the five commandments, the keeping of which leads to self-renunciation and holiness of life. Offerings of rice, sweetmeats,

and flowers, daintily arranged on lacquer dishes, are laid before the shrines and left for the birds and dogs to eat. There are here no religious services, no priestly ceremonies; the Shway Dagohn is simply a holy place for prayer and meditation, a shrine where the heart is lifted up by contemplating the three precious things, the Lord, the Law, and the Assembly. To call the statues of Gautauma idols and the Burmans idolaters is to

PRAYING AT THE PAGODA.

show a profound ignorance of the essential beliefs of Buddhism. There is no God in Buddhism, and Gautauma Buddha is not deified by his followers. His memory is revered and loved, and his great example followed, more or less, but even here in his holiest shrine he is not worshipped in the religious sense. The prayers we hear uttered with so much earnestness are not being said for benefit or for aid, but the praises of Buddha are being sung and his commandments repeated, till the worshipper brings his mind into sympathy with the great Ideal.

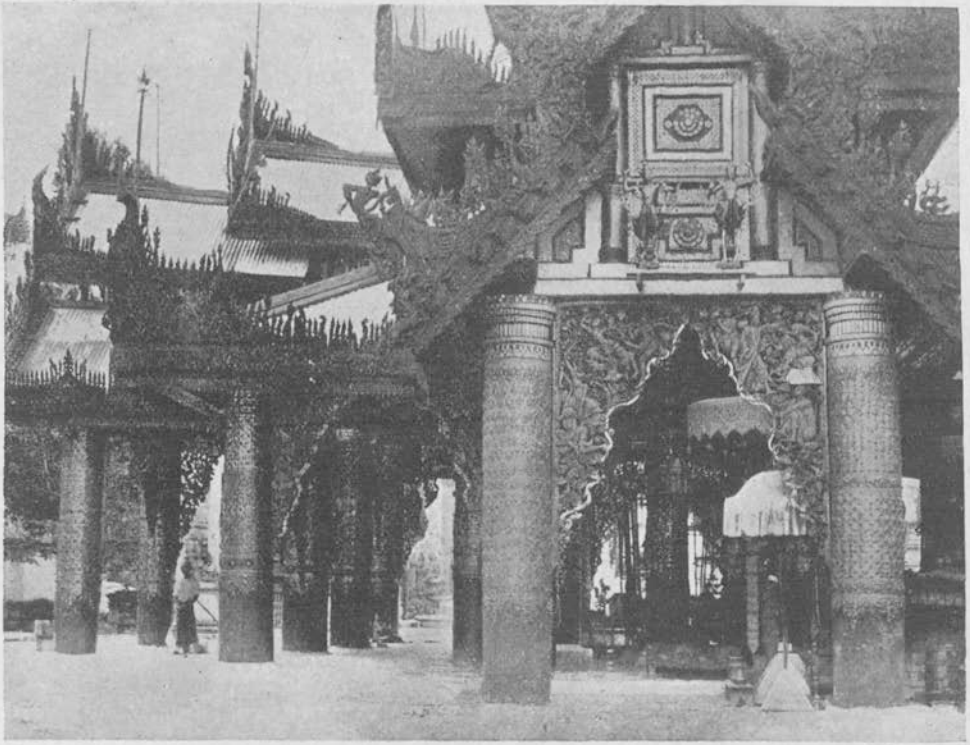
To be bewitched by the Shway Dagohn, one must see it by the light of the full moon. It is late, and the moon is high in the heavens as we grope our way in the darkness of the colonnades and stumble up the uneven steps. The wide platform is deserted, not a worshipper disturbs the solitude, not a muttered prayer breaks the silence of the night; the brazen solemn faces of the Gautaumas gleam in the shadows, and the Nats on the carved roofs seem to be mutely dancing to the music of the stars. "High striving to the upper air," the tapering cupola rises towards the heavens, from which the soughing of the midnight wind wafts down the tinkling of the jewelled bells swinging on the golden htee above. As we descend the hill again to where the monster beasts are staring with blank white faces at the moon, we muse on the mighty power of Buddhism, the faith of hundreds of millions of the human race, and the lines embodying a current belief in Burma rise to our minds:—

"When white men reign,
Thy glories wane,
Yet blaze again
While yet they reign."

Buddhist festivals are celebrated at the new moon and the full moon, and on these days the wide platform is crowded from morn to eve with worshippers, and the stairway is thronged with as brilliant a crowd as can be seen anywhere in the East.

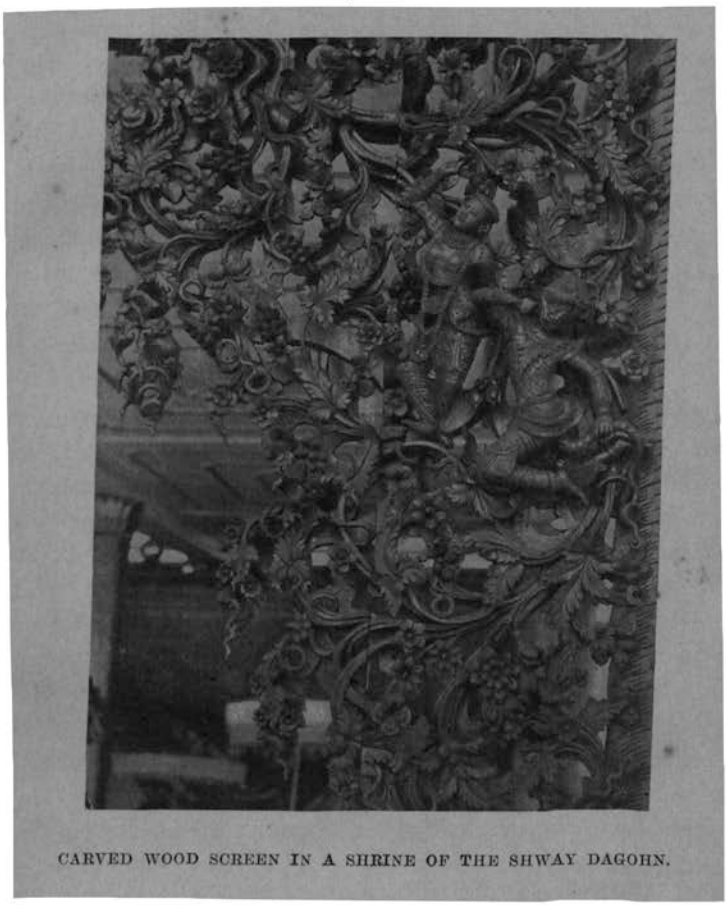
At the foot of the hill of the Pagoda are numerous monasteries standing in shady woods. The roofs and balconies of these kioungs or monasteries are handsomely carved. Extending along the roads leading to the Pagoda there are long lines of rest-houses, intended for the use of pilgrims who come from a distance to lodge for the night.

To show how tenacious the Burmans are of preserving their



A SHRINE ON THE PLATFORM OF THE SHWAY DAGOHN.

ancient customs, and also the antiquity of their holy places, the descriptions of Pegu by the European travellers of the sixteenth century are interesting reading. Gasparo Balbi, a



CARVED WOOD SCREEN IN A SHRINE OF THE SHWAY DAGOHN.

Venetian traveller, who visited Dagohn in 1593, gives the following description of the Pagoda. He writes:—"After we were landed, we began to goe on the right hand in a large

street about fifty paces broad, in which were some wooden houses gilded, and adorned with delicate gardens after their customs, wherein their Talapois, which are their Friers, dwelt, and looke to the Pagoda or Varella of Dagon. The left side is furnished with portals and shops, very like the new Procuratia at Venice; and by this street they goe towards the Varella, for the space of a good mile straight forwards, either under paint houses or in the open street, which is free to walke in. When we came to the Varella, we found a paire of staires of ninety steps, as long in my judgement as the channel of the Rialta of Venice. At the foot of the first staire are two tigres, one at the right hand and the other at the left; these are of stone. The staires are divided into three, the first is forty steps, the second thirty, and the third twenty, and at the top of each of them is a plaine spacious place. On the last step are Angels of stone, each with three crowns one upon the other. They have the right hand lifted up, ready to give the benediction, with two fingers stretched out. The other hand of one is laid upon the head of a childe, and of the other upon the head of an Ape. These statues are all of stone. At the right hand is a Varella (Pagoda) gilded in a round form, made of stone, and as much in compasse as the streete before the Venetian Palace, if it was round, and the height may equal Saint Markes Bell-Tower, not the top of it, but the little pinnaces. At the left hand is a faire Hall carved and gilded within and without. And this is the place of devotion, whither the people goe to hear the Talapois preach; the streete is greater than Saint Markes, at least larger. And this is a place of great devotion amongst them, and yearly multitudes of people come by sea and by land. And when they celebrate a solemn Feast, the King in person goeth before them all, and with him the Queene, the Prince and his other sonnes, with a great traine of nobles and others, who goe to get a pardon. And on this day there is a great Mart, where are all sorts

of merchandises which are current in those countries, which they frequent in great multitudes, and which come thither not so much for devotion as traffique, and we may freely goe thither if wee will." [1]

Truly, the Shway Dagohn has altered but little in three hundred years. The stone stairways are still thronged by multitudes who come thither by land and by sea, and Rangoon is still frequented not so much for devotion as for traffic.

It was indeed the wonderful opportunities which the port of Rangoon offered for trafficking in the wealthy produce of Burma that made it so desired by the British. From Chittagong to Ceylon there is no port its equal, and the fabled wealth of the Indies is not so well worth possessing as the vast forests and the abundant produce of the fertile land of "the Lord of the White Elephants."

When wandering one day among the shrines on the platform of the Shway Dagohn, and thinking only of Gautauma and his faith, we were startled by suddenly coming across, under the shade of trees on the north side, a group of plain tombstones with inscriptions in English commending the dead lying there to God. These are the graves of our soldiers who fell on this spot in the second Burmese war, and we are thus rudely reminded of the fact that this holy place has twice been turned into a fortress by an invading enemy. In the first Burmese war, in 1824, the hill and platform of the Pagoda were taken by the British troops without resistance, the town of Rangoon having been deserted by its inhabitants and protectors. Here, however, our troops found themselves, though masters of a deserted city, yet besieged by want and disease in their own fortress, and were slain by famine, cholera, and dysentery, instead of by the dahs of the Burmese.

In the second Burmese war, in 1852, the Pagoda was defended by a very strong stockade on the south side, and

[1] "Purchas' Pilgrims," vol. ii. p. 1726.

by a quantity of ordnance, as the Burmese had made up their minds that the British would attack from this side, while the steps on the east side were left unprotected. A gallant party led by Captain Latter swarmed up this stairway and took the fortress while the Burmese soldiers were blindly trusting to the protection of their stockades, and it was held as the key of the position till the province of Pegu was annexed and Rangoon became British.

Since that day Rangoon has made rapid progress. Its growth has been quite marvellous. A strong Government has taken the place of one ferocious, and justice has stepped into the seat of tyranny. A custom-house, handsome stone buildings, hotels, Government offices and streets of shops now greet the traveller's eye on dropping anchor at Rangoon. Beyond the town, and beside broad, well-made roads, are the bungalows of the English, set in the midst of park-like gardens of tamarind, peepul, and palm trees. The beautiful lakes form part of a great public park where gymkhanas delight the gay English residents. Schools and missions are abundant in Rangoon, and here Dr. Marks has carried on his splendid educational work and has educated no less than 15,000 Burman boys. A large hospital has been established under the care of Dr. Johnstone and others, and at Lady Dufferin's Fund Hospital the gentle Burmese and Karen women are taught to be nurses of the sick.

To possess the teak growing in such abundance in the forests of Tenasserim and Upper Burma was the desire of British traders long before Burma was annexed, and it was the quarrels of the Bombay-Burma Company with King Theebaw which, among other things, led to the third Burmese war and the conquest of Upper Burma. The Forest Department is now an important one in the government. The ports of Rangoon and Maulmain are the chief centres of the teak trade. An immense raft of teak logs slowly drifting down

the river, with a bamboo cottage built on its wide expanse, and a man with a long pole standing fore and aft to guide the cumbrous thing over shallows and eddies, is one of the familiar spectacles on the Irrawaddy, as to see elephants stacking logs in the timber-yards is one of the sights of Rangoon.

The sun had not yet had time to provoke the genial heat of a Burmese winter day when we found ourselves early one morning in January in the timber-yards of Messrs. Macgregor at Rangoon, with the object of seeing elephants act as coolies in hauling, piling, and stacking teak logs. The gentle giants were already at work in different parts of the great yard and in the sheds. Two powerful male tuskers, nearly as large as the favourite and ill-fated Jumbo, and said to be worth £1000 the pair, were busy stacking squared logs of teak, each of which weighed about two tons. Kneeling down, one at each end of a log, the elephants, on signs given by their drivers by means of voice, foot, and a hooked stick, insert their long tusks underneath, and grasping it above with their powerful and muscular trunks, lift it high in air and place it on the top of the stack. One elephant then backs to the end of the stack, and neatly pushes the log forward with his trunk, till it lies perfectly level with its fellows. These elephants have been more than a quarter of a century at this work, and are said to display quite extraordinary intelligence in the way they place and carefully adjust their heavy burdens; they are even credited by some admirers with a conscientious desire to do their work well. Indeed, the story is told of an elephant which had the habit of shutting one eye while he adjusted the other to the log to see that it lay properly square! I do not, however, vouch for the truth of this story.

At other parts of the yard elephants were to be seen dragging along heavy logs by means of a chain fastened round the wood and with the other end firmly gripped between their ivory teeth, or they were engaged in pushing beams by

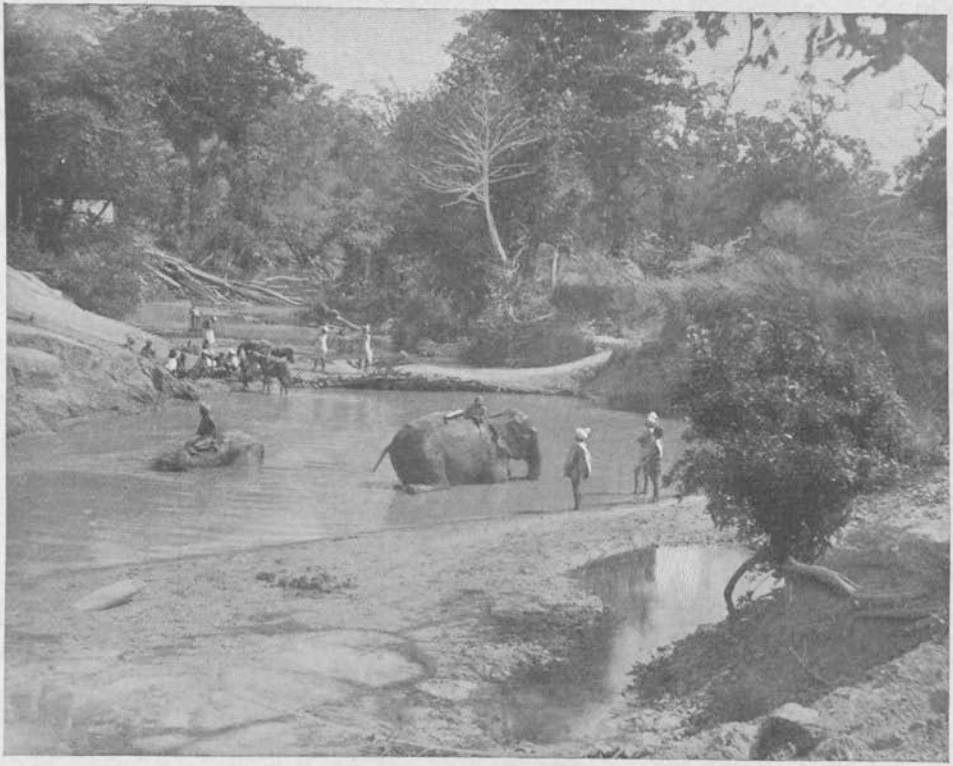
their trunks and feet towards the tables of the circular saws, or lifting them high in the air on their tusks: the titanic beasts easily carried logs weighing a ton or more, from one part of the yard to the other.

Oftentimes the animals are heard to grumble over their tasks, and when called upon to lift a specially heavy log, protestations are made in elephant language; but their docility and quick obedience are what most surprise visitors. One immense female was called to make a curtsey to me, which she did with all the grace an elephant could command.

The beasts are trained to their work when young in the forests where the teak is felled and brought down to the river; or else in the timber-yard itself, chained to an old elephant which knows its work well.

These coolie elephants are said to give their attendants no trouble; they are fed on immense bundles of twigs and on rice, and "are given a dose of medicine every Sabbath-day to keep them good-tempered;" thus busy and happy they are stated to live 150 years. In the heat of the day they rest, as elephants may suffer from sunstroke, to protect them from which they wear in the hot weather huge solah topes made of straw.

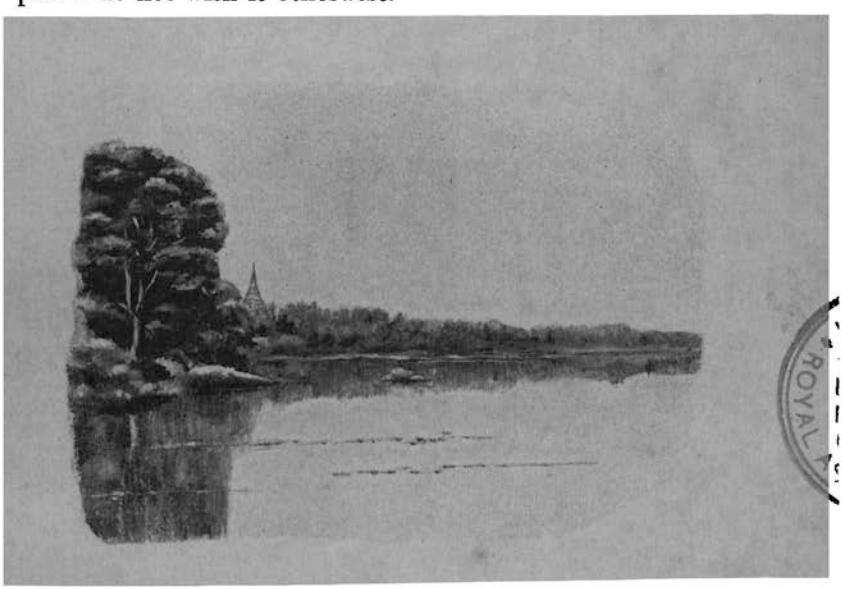
The trade of Rangoon has made immense strides in the last forty years. In the first decade of the century not more than from eighteen to twenty-five vessels cleared out of the port annually; between the first and second Burmese wars the average annual number of vessels engaged both in export and import trade was not more than 125 annually, and of these not more than 25 were European ships. After the annexation of Pegu in 1853 trade increased rapidly, and in 1884 we find Mr. Bernard, the Chief Commissioner of Lower Burma, reporting to the Government that "the volume of British trade across our frontier with Ava equals 62 per cent. of the total trade across the whole land frontier of India from Kurrachee to Chittagong," and amounted even in the



WASHING ELEPHANTS.

time of King Theebaw to £3,225,000 per annum. In the report of the administration of Burma for 1894–95 it is stated that the total number of vessels engaged in the sea-borne trade was 6335, and the total tonnage 3,975,148. The total value of the sea-borne trade is estimated at Rs.222,242,542. Most of this trade passes through Rangoon, but large shipments of rice are made also from Akyab and Bassein, and of rice and teak timber from Maulmain.

The figures speak for themselves. But though Rangoon has become a prosperous British port, it has not ceased to be Burmese. The Shway Dagohn still dominates the city, and as long as the Burmese youths continue to pass through the portals of the kioungs into manhood, the conquered people will be Buddhist and Burmese to their hearts' core; and for my part I do not wish it otherwise.



THE GREAT ROYAL LAKE AT RANGOON, WITH THE SHWAY DAGOHN IN THE DISTANCE.

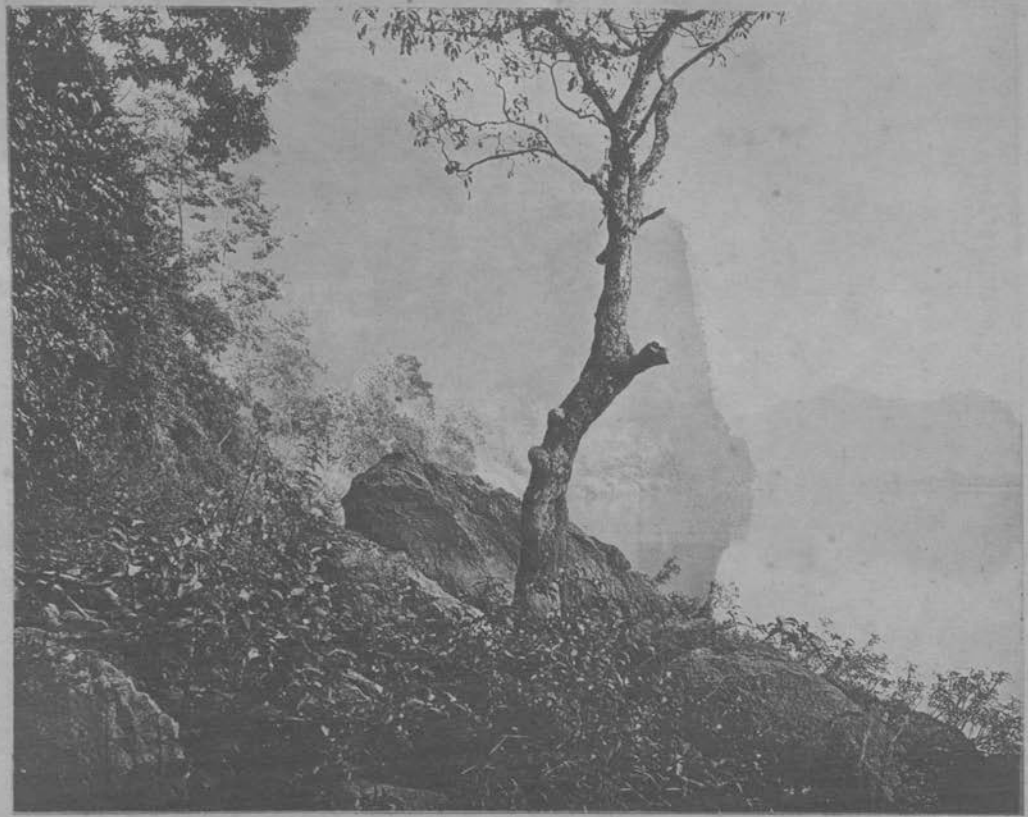
CHAPTER II

A THOUSAND MILES UP THE IRRAWADDY

THE broad and winding river of the Irrawaddy is the great water-way of Burma, from the lofty Shan hills on the frontier of China to the Bay of Bengal. A country with such a water-way is assured for ever of one element of prosperity; but to maintain the river as a high-road for steamers is a work of conservancy of no small difficulty.

The Irrawaddy is said to be the largest body of melted snow in the world, not even excepting the Ganges. When swollen by the rains and the melted snows, it comes down as a mighty torrent through the narrow and rocky banks of the upper and second defiles, rising, it is stated, in the former often ninety feet above its normal level. Bursting in whirlpools and hurrying eddies from its narrow limits, it spreads over the low-lying country as a vast expanse of water, and leaves behind, when it retires to its bed, malaria and fever, which have won for Upper Burma the reputation of being a "pestilential swamp."

Far otherwise was the great river when we went up and down its long reaches in the sunny days of a Burmese winter. Shallows and long spits of yellow sand alternated with deep water, and all day long the sing-song call of the Chittagonians at the bows, who never ceased taking soundings with long poles, rang in our ears as the great boat zig-zagged from bank to bank of the broad river, and the idle day passed idly along. Never can I forget the sense of peace, contentment, and



enjoyment which possessed me during the ten days we were on the Irrawaddy.

Travelling is easy; "the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company" daily runs steamers which are specially constructed to meet the requirements of the country and the people. Drawing but four and a half feet of water, they can pass over the shallows of the river in the dry season, and can escape the whirlpools when it is in flood. Usually built as three-deckers, these Irrawaddy boats accommodate in the rear a motley crowd of Burmans, Chinese, Kachins, and Shans, while the bows of the second deck are reserved for European travellers. Here four or eight comfortable and roomy cabins will accommodate a small party. The dining-table is set under an awning in the bows, where reclining in a long chair one can pass the time in comfort watching the scenes on bank and river. The artist will find the day full to overflowing with delightful impressions; the vacant-minded will be bored.

The steamers are of two kinds, mail-boats and trading boats. The first carry only passengers and mails, steam as fast as possible as long as daylight lasts, and anchor at nightfall in mid-stream. The cargo or trading boats are much the most amusing in which to travel. The first-class accommodation in the bows is quite as good as in the mail-boats, but the decks in the rear are covered with stalls where a brisk trade is carried on with the inhabitants of every village at which the boat calls. The ship is, in fact, a travelling bazaar, and carries peripatetic shops and the necessaries of civilised life to the dwellers on the banks of the great river. To the steamer is generally attached one or two floats on either side. On these immense barges farm produce is carried and sold, while in the main steamer native silks, pottery, and lacquer, Manchester and Birmingham goods are exposed for sale.

The decks of the steamer afford constant amusement, endless material for the sketcher, and interesting studies for

the ethnologist. The races on board are various. Here is a family of Kachins with brown good-natured faces, small eyes, flat noses, and immense turbans, and who are returning from making an offering of gold-leaf at the Shway Dagohn. There are Shan merchants, who, dressed in uncleanly garments and immense flapping sun-hats, are guarding their merchandise with jealous care; and there, apart from the noisy throng, is a group of phongyees telling their beads on rosaries. The prosperous, pigtailed Chinaman smokes his long pipe and looks on good-humouredly. The Burmese woman, in scanty silk tamein and white jacket, is filled with the cares of trade, and drives a bargain with eager eyes and voluble speech, while her taciturn husband sits idly by, smoking and wondering why nature made women so keen and active. The cargo-boats call three times during the day at river-side villages, and at about five o'clock in the evening they tie up for the night beside one of them.[1]

The river was in perfect condition when, in the beautiful weather of a Burmese winter, we ascended its winding reaches as far as Bhamo. This trip, so little known to seekers after new impressions, is one of the most enjoyable and interesting which can be taken on any river in any part of the world.

Let me try and realise to my readers a day afloat on the Irrawaddy in the winter. We have been tied up for the night, and at dawn of day the mist lies low on the water, and the air is as chilly as on an October morning in Scotland, so that while sipping seven-o'clock tea in the open parlour in the bows, we instinctively button our pilot-jackets closely up to our throats. Presently the mist lifts, and the tropical sun shines out clear and strong.

From the bamboo houses, built on piles in the village on the

[1] We would advise travellers who care to see something of the people and villages, to travel by the cargo rather than by the mail boats.

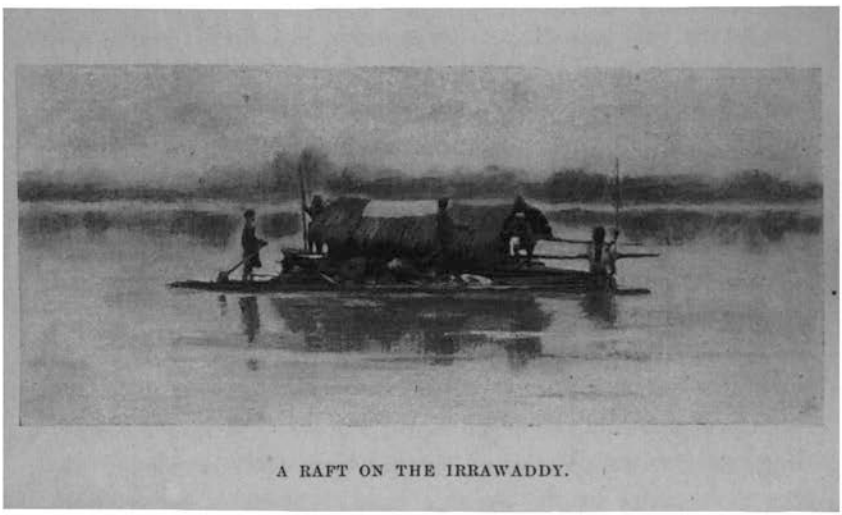
IRRAWADDY PADDY BOAT WITH CARVED STEERING CHAIR.

hill, stream out in twos and twos the village maidens, clad in clinging rainbow-tinted garments, and with red clay water-jars on their heads. They come down to the river-side, walk unconcernedly into the water, fill their jars, or take their morning dip, still modestly clothed, and each girl is a picture, classic in form, oriental in colour. Gaily laughing and chatting, they balance the jars on their heads, and pass up the hill and out of sight to the houses built of bamboo and plaited matting, which are the only sombre spots in the landscape. On a low mound gleams the white cupola of a pagoda, and from the grove of palms and plantains rise the carved seven-storied spires of the Phongyeé Kioung. From these issue a silent procession of yellow-robed monks, who pace solemnly along the road with bent heads and with black alms-bowls in their hands.

As we wait, a fisherman brings in his canoe laden with silvery fish, and he stands in the sunshine, clad in crimson and orange and green, chaffering with women whose pink and mauve tameins are reflected in the still water. Kachin women in embroidered gaiters, short skirts, high blue turbans, and immense sun-hats, are cooking their breakfasts on the shore: Burmese coolies with bare tattooed legs are running up and down the river-bank: the tall white-turbaned Sikh looks on solemnly, and the pig-tailed Chinaman is busy with his merchandise. The banks are a mass of moving colour, and the brilliantly dressed figures are at once the delight and the despair of the sketcher. Since daylight the villagers have been crowding down to the water-edge and on to our boat, and for an hour or more the most lively chaffering and bargaining go on over silk tameins and pasohs, Manchester goods, Birmingham hardware and jewellery, and Burmese lacquer-work. The steam-whistle sounds, the crowd is merrily jostled off the boat, the anchor is weighed, and we are off.

The day grows in beauty, and the foggy October morning

develops into the brilliant hot July day of an English summer. On, on we go, zig-zagging to avoid the shallows, through scenery which is always beautiful, though rarely of commanding grandeur. It recalls at one time the lochs of Scotland, at another Killarney or the English lakes: never perhaps quite so beautiful as any of these, but with the colour of Venice and the light of the tropics. The hills are clothed with dense forests, through which tigers and elephants roam at will: we do



A RAFT ON THE IRRAWADDY.

not, however, see or hear anything of them, but green monkeys are observed gambolling on the banks, and cormorants, paddy-birds, and cranes enliven the scene. Villages of bamboo houses nestle among groves of palms, tamarinds, and bananas, and every hill and promontory is crowned with a cluster of white pagodas.

Broad rafts of teak and bamboo idly glide down-stream, or gondola-like boats pass by, with high, carved, steering chairs, manned with crews dressed in pink and crimson and yellow; Burmese dug-outs are leisurely paddled up-stream with the

canoeist standing, making a brilliant spot of colour in bow or stern. In the sand by the river-bank women are searching for rubies, washed down from the mountains which contain the famous ruby mines. The colour of the whole scene is fine and subtle: the feathery undergrowth of bamboo gives a yellow basis to the forest trees which pass from greens and russets to positive scarlet; and the brilliant costumes of the people, and the colours of sky and water, are all blended and mellowed in the intense sunlight.

As the day draws in to afternoon, sheeny tints of mauve and pink shoot across the water. The sun sets gloriously; quickly the land is dark, but for a wondrous half-hour, sky and water are molten in the gold and purple and crimson of the after-glow.

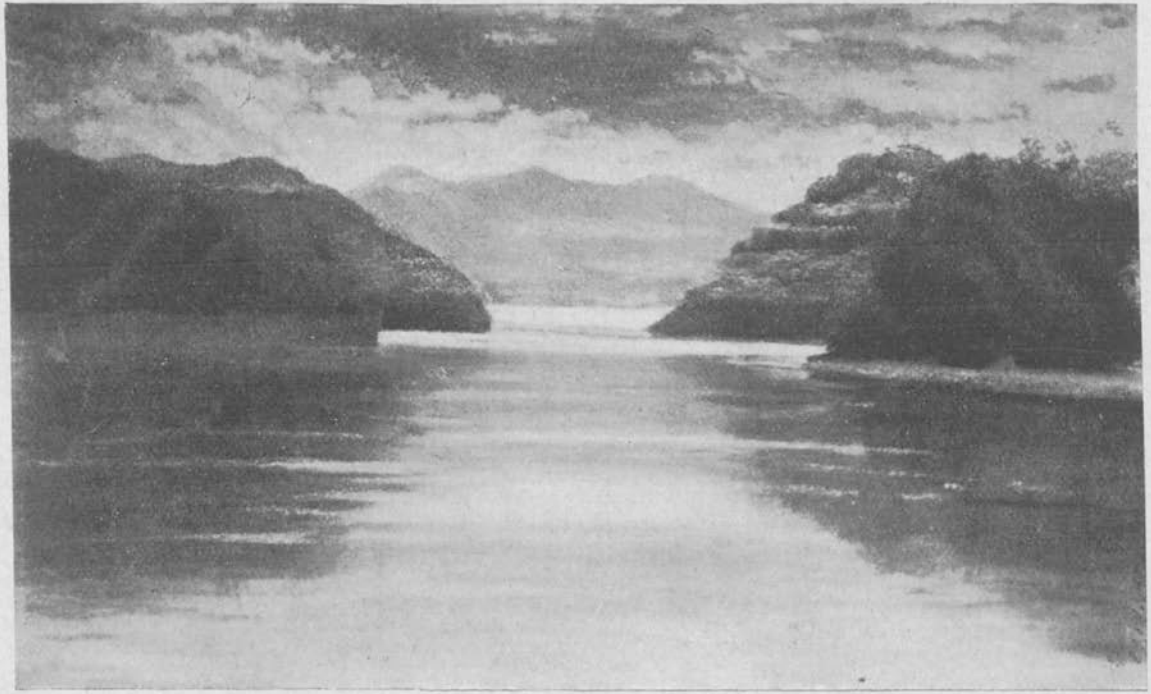
At a signal from the captain four or five bare-backed sailors plunge into the river and swim ashore carrying a rope, and we are soon tied up for the night. We hasten to visit the monastery and the pagodas on the hill before it is dark, and we wonder anew at the piety which permeates the nation. We go into the village and see weird groups of happy families squatting in the roomy, open cottages round wood-fires blazing in the middle of the floors, and we note how patiently the children watch the simple preparations being made by the busy housewife for the evening meal. There is no grinding poverty in Burma; a bounteous soil, a hot sun, a religion with a fine moral code, and the absence of intemperance have combined to make the Burmese a happy and contented race. There is also no caste with its cruel divisions of class; the women are free, children are adored, and marriage is respected. The gay easy manners, the jovial and amiable temperament of the Burmans, are remarked by every foreigner.

Twilight is short and the night falls quickly. The small party of travellers gather round the dinner-table set in the bows, and until a late hour the captain entertains them with yarns about the stirring times of the recent past: tales of

dacoity, of King Theebaw and his ruthless queen, of deeds of blood, violence, and heroism enacted in these very river-side villages.

Thus day after day passes pleasantly along, and the count of time is lost in the sense of always passing on and on, borne by the shining river through groves and vales, past the silent monuments of a stately religion, and among a people clad like the flowers in spring.

To the artist the Irrawaddy is a dream of fine concords of colour and form; to the archæologist its treasures are inexhaustible. From the 999 pagodas at Shwebo to the 9999 at Pagahn, these monuments to Buddhism can be studied in every form and of every date, from the earliest to the present time. At Prome the hill is crowned by the great golden Shway San-Daw, hung with a myriad bells: the lofty temples, echoing galleries, and colossal Gautaumas at Pagahn, relics of the Buddhism of a thousand years ago, are alone worth a journey to Burma to see; while the stately bell-shaped pagodas standing among the ruins of the royal city of Amourapoora recalled to my mind the graceful domes of the tombs of the Caliphs near Cairo. The white pinnacles and golden spires on the hills above the river at Sagaing, with thousands of stone steps leading pilgrims wearily up the steep ascents, attract visitors from Mandalay. Higher up the river is the monster pagoda of Mengohn, which was rent from one end to another by an earthquake. Close by is the largest bell but one in the world, weighing ninety tons. It was cast in bronze by the *cire-perdu* method amid the rejoicings of the people, who threw their bangles of gold and silver into the melting-pots. Under the hill of Mandalay are 450 pagodas containing the tables of the law. To mention even the names and to give the numbers of the sacred buildings is as impossible as it is to visit them, for every wood has its fane, every cliff its crowning cupola, and every village, however poor,



THE ENTRANCE TO THE SECOND DEFILE. EARLY MORNING.

From a Pastel Sketch by the Author.

has also its phongyee kioung or monk's house, to which the members of the order of the yellow robe retire to live a life of celibacy, austerity, and contemplation.

Beyond the second defile, where the river runs forty fathoms deep between high wooded cliffs, is Bhamo, the frontier town, within thirty miles of the Chinese boundary. Here is a large cantonment for British and Indian troops, and a considerable Chinese settlement. The railway will soon be carried to Bhamo, and then not only will the wild Kachins of the hills be kept better under control, but the wide country of Upper Burma will be opened up to the enterprising British colonist.

Before the natural beauties and the architectural glories of Upper Burma lose their charm from the introduction of civilisation and the commonplace, those who love beauty and colour, and who enjoy studying native races and customs, should spend some time idling on the Irrawaddy.

CHAPTER III

THE ROYAL CITY OF MANDALAY

THE royal city of Mandalay is not attractive at first sight. The broad, straight, dusty roads stretch out for miles at right angles to one another, the streets being laid out on a rectangular plan and numbered as in Chicago. On either side of the long streets are grey bamboo houses, built on piles, which are so slight in construction that they look as if a strong wind would blow them away: interspersed among them are brick and plaster buildings, which are either unfinished and untidy, or wear a jaded look of disrepair. This is the first impression on coming off the shining river; but day by day, as one comes to know Mandalay better, its attractions become apparent, and it presently seems difficult to exhaust its interests. The city constantly reminded me of Tokio, and is, I think, almost as interesting.

Mandalay stands on a plain which is bounded by the amphitheatre of the Ruby-mine mountains. It is a mile and a half from the river, and the site is consequently not well chosen for commerce. It is easily reached by rail from Rangoon, from which it is distant about 500 miles.

In the centre of the present town is the city of King Theebaw, which is surrounded by a high wall and by a moat 150 feet broad. This moat is in the summer overgrown with the lotus flower. At all times it gives great picturesqueness to Mandalay, especially at sundown, when the puce-coloured mountains and the pinnacles of the city are reflected in its placid waters. In the King's time the gorgeous royal barge

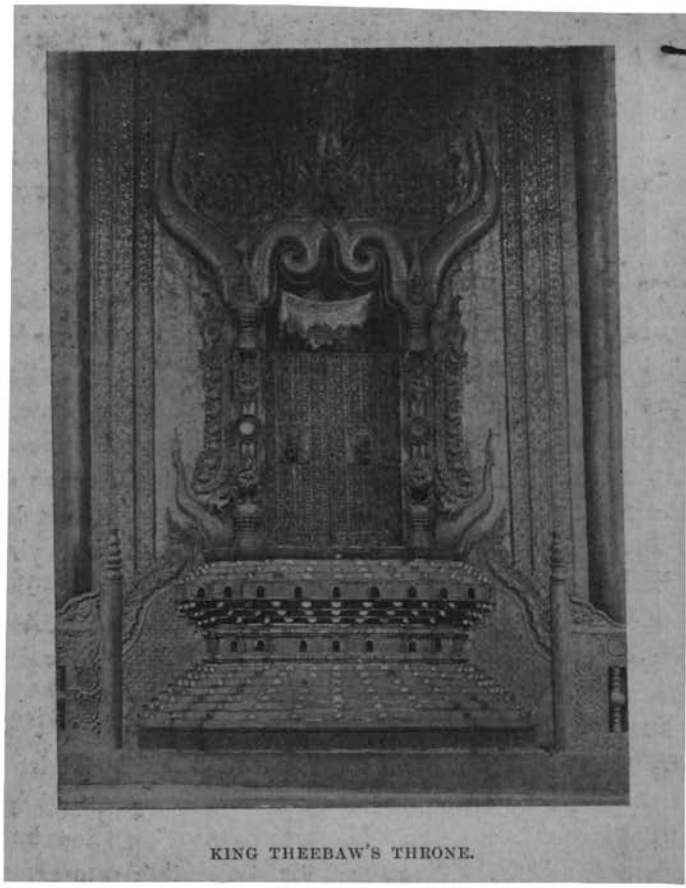
lay in the moat, and boat-races were held here. Each wall of the city is a mile and an eighth long, and is pierced by three gates, surmounted by characteristic seven-tiered roofs. The old city is now the site of the cantonment of the British troops, the native inhabitants having been turned out beyond the gates after the occupation, their houses burned and the space cleared and cleansed.

In the centre of the great square the golden palaces of the King and his four principal Queens are still standing, together with the Halls of Audience and the Water-clock Tower.

The palaces are, even now, splendid types of barbaric magnificence, sumptuously carved, covered with gold-leaf within and without, and decorated with coarse but effective mosaics, composed of pieces of mirror, coloured glass, and cut-glass jewels. Though three, five, or seven roofed, according to the rank of the persons occupying the different palaces of the royal compound, there is but one floor in each building, as the Burmans have a strong objection to anybody's feet being over their heads. Hence all the buildings in Burma are one-storied. Tall and perfectly straight teak columns, which are lacquered bright red, gilded with gold leaf, and decorated with mirror-mosaics, support the lofty roofs. At the end of the Halls of Audience, carved and gilded thrones are built into the walls, and are raised on a daïs about ten feet from the floor.

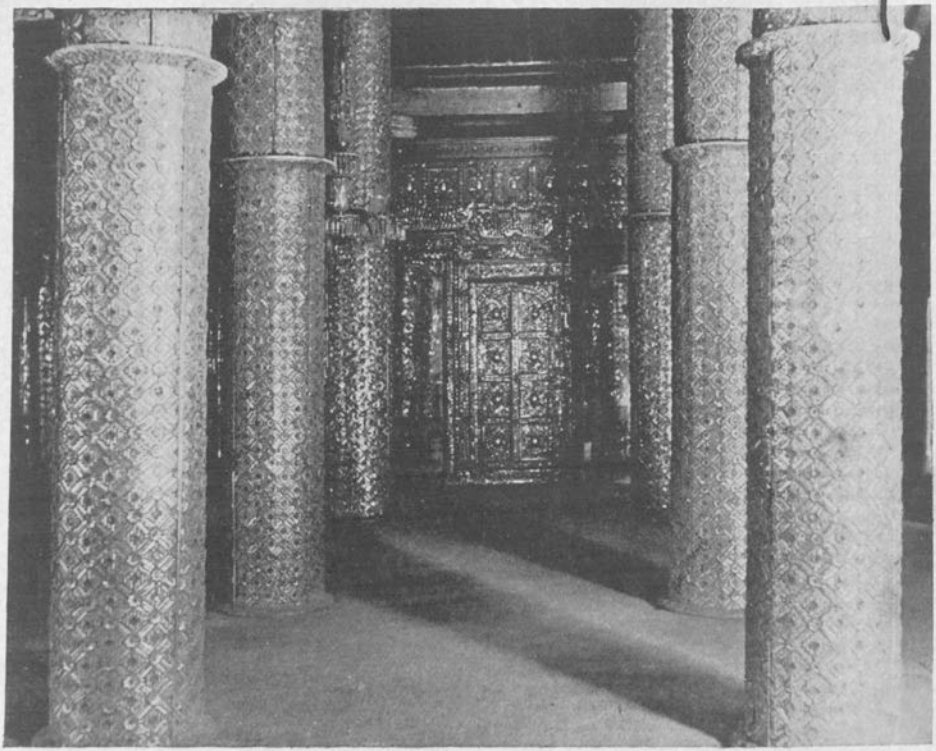
In the accounts of the "Missions to Ava," written by Mr. Crawfurd and Colonel Yule, graphic descriptions are given of the ceremony when the King was dramatically revealed to his suppliant subjects, seated on his throne in the Audience Hall of Ava or of Amaurapoora, which buildings were in every way similar to that of Mandalay. On the sudden withdrawal of the golden lattice which screened the throne, the King was seen either seated, or in the act of mounting the steps, heavily

bedecked with golden garments and jewels. A long sword in a scabbard of pure gold was in his hand, and his golden betel-box and spittoon were placed beside him. At the sight of the



KING THEEBAW'S THRONE.

King all present prostrated themselves, knees, elbows, and foreheads on to the ground. His Majesty addressed a few formal questions to those to whom he wished to speak, and then withdrew. The procession to the palace on reception days of the grandees, brilliantly apparelled, mounted on elephants with



LACQUERED AND GLASS-MOSAICKED COLUMNS IN THE PALACE AT MANDALAY.

gorgeous trappings, and followed by splendid retinues, was a sight which few if any Oriental cities could match in brilliancy, and which was to be seen in Mandalay but fifteen years ago.

The King's Hall of Audience is of noble proportions, 260 feet long, and its lofty roof is supported by a double colonnade of scarlet and gold teak pillars which take the place of outer walls. The building is surmounted by a spire of great beauty and elegance, which is situated over the throne, and is hence arrogantly styled "the centre of the universe." It rises by a series of seven diminishing roofs till crowned by a resplendent htee, said to be made of pure gold. Corrugated iron is ingeniously used to fill up the spaces between the delicately carved eaves, and the grey flutings harmonise strangely well with the colour of the carvings and the upward lines of the pinnacles. The Supreme Council Chamber of Hlwotdaw was near the east gate. It was without walls, like the Audience Hall. In fact, the members of the Council held their deliberations in public. They sat in solemn state, each with a white fillet round his head, and the cords of nobility across his breast. The Water-clock Tower is a campanile of much beauty. Here a great bell used to be rung at the four watches of the day to give time to the city.

In the royal compound is a garden, now sadly neglected, in which a winding canal gives many pretty views. Under the trees is the summer-house where King Theebaw and his Queen awaited General Prendergast at the fall of Mandalay, and received the ultimatum of the British Government. The building is very simple, but it was selected for the audience because the King could sit on a raised platform while the English General stood on the ground on a lower level, without his being obliged by Burmese court etiquette to remove his shoes, which was obligatory in the King's Audience Hall. King Theebaw knew full well that the English conqueror would not approach barefooted; so, anxious to preserve his arrogant

pretensions of kingship to the last, he received the British envoy in the summer-house in the garden.

In the royal compound were also the treasury or mint and the arsenal. The palace was, in fact, the key of the kingdom of Burma. Whoever held the palace, held the treasury and the arsenal, which meant controlling the purse and the sinews of war. Queen Supayah Lat is said to have obtained her great influence by getting possession of the key of the treasury, which she obliged the minister in charge to give up to her. The whole of the royal buildings were enclosed in a strong teak stockade, twenty feet high, within which were two brick walls, a hundred feet distant from each other. Gilded cannons were mounted within these walls, many of which were found on examination by English artillerymen not to be bored, and some of them were so mounted that whichever way they were pointed they must fire into the palace. The old city extended from the palace stockade to the outer moated walls. The streets were wide and planted with trees, and were laid parallel with the walls. Though innocent of drainage, the city is said to have been free from bad smells, for numerous pigs and carrion dogs acted in the most effective way as scavengers.

The traditions of the Burmese royal house were bad, and even King Mindohn, the most mild and just of the kings of the dynasty of Alompra, was not free from the cruel superstitions of his race. Mandalay was founded, as other royal cities, on human sacrifices. The burying alive of human victims was, it is stated, practised even in laying the foundations of the walls of Mandalay as late as the year 1858.[1] Three persons were interred alive under each of the twelve gates of the city, one under each of the four corners of the wall, one under each of the palace gates, and one at each corner of the timber stockade of the palace, and four under the throne

[1] It is only fair to state that King Mindohn denied to Colonel Fytche that this was true.

of the King. The victims were persons of representative rank, and the boys and girls selected were so young that their ears were not bored nor their legs tattooed.

Shway Yoe tells[1] that with each human being buried under the city walls at the four corners were placed jars of oil carefully protected. These were examined every seven years by the astrologers, and as long as they remained intact the city was considered safe. On the third examination in Mandalay in 1880, the oil in only one of the jars was found intact; in the others it had either leaked out or dried up. There were other evil omens at the same time; small-pox had broken out, and a tiger had escaped from his cage in the royal menagerie and had mauled a man. The astrologers urged the removal of the royal city to another site, but King Theebaw refused to give consent. The burial of numerous victims was then suggested as a way of propitiating the spirits of evil. A royal mandate was, it is alleged, signed for the arrest of 100 men, 100 women, 100 boys, 100 girls, 100 soldiers, and 100 foreigners. Mandalay was seized with panic; everybody who could leave the city hurried away in the Irrawaddy steamers or in boats to British Burma. Public indignation was excited in England; the royal order was withdrawn, and the intended massacre stoutly denied. Many persons had, however, been arrested, and in the dead watches of the night, when no one dared stir out in Mandalay, it is averred that under each of the posts of the gates of the city a human victim was interred alive, to propitiate the spirits and to prevent the English taking the capital. Thus Mandalay was founded in massacre, and by massacre the King sought to make his seat on the throne secure. In the gilded halls of the palace the ruthless orders were given by the Hlwot-daw and Queen Supayah Lat that forty members of the royal family should be done to death.

[1] "The Burman," by Shway Yoe.

Here they were stabbed, choked, had their mouths filled with gunpowder and were blown up. For three days cries of anguish and appeals for mercy were drowned by the noisy music of cymbals and drums, and then the dead, who tell no tales, were buried in a ditch within the palace walls, and the ferocious Queen Supayah Lat and her weak consort thought Mandalay and their crowns were safe from the far-reaching hands of the pale-faced conquerors.

On the first evening of my arrival at Mandalay, I was wandering through the gilded palaces, and picturing in imagination the barbaric magnificence and the violent deeds of massacre of which these halls had been the scene, when I was startled by hearing the sound of an English hymn-tune borne on the evening air. I was reminded that it was Sunday, and, guided by the singing, I found my way in the gloaming to the place whence it proceeded, and passing through the tall colonnades of scarlet and gilded pillars, I entered King Theebaw's Audience Hall, where an English chaplain and a regiment of soldiers were engaged in the performance of the evening service. Thus in the very heart of the Burmese empire the conquering race had set up its altar to God, and under the empty throne of the tyrant who arrogantly styled himself the "King of kings" the worship of Jehovah was inaugurated. Truly the contrast was impressive.

In their heyday of magnificence the royal palaces of Mandalay are described by eye-witnesses as having been gaudy and gorgeous in the extreme. Now their glory is departed; the gold-leaf is peeling off and is not being replaced, the looking-glass mosaics are grey with dust, the lofty halls have been rifled of their costly decorations, Queen Supayah Lat's audience chamber is the headquarters of the English Club, King Theebaw's golden throne, which none dared approach except grovelling on the ground on knees and elbows and with eyes

THE QUEEN'S GOLDEN KIOUNG.

cast down, is exposed to the gaze of the vulgar, and the Bengali baboo writes his marvellous compositions in the palaces of the queens, now used as dusty Government offices.

We will leave the palace with its violent contrasts and harsh incongruities, and wend our way in one of the queer rumbling gharries, drawn by rat-like though vigorous little ponies, to the Queen's Golden Kioung, the carved and gilded roofs of which were seen among the palm trees as we drove up from the river after landing. In the midst of a wide planted space stands the graceful building. Constructed of teak wood, the balustrades, doorways, and walls, and the eaves of the seven-roofed spires, are all profusely carved with figures representing events in the life of Gautauma or the doings of the Nats. The whole of the great pile, from the topmost carved pinnacle to the steps leading from the ground, is gilded both inside and out. At each corner of the compound stand four buildings resembling the central one in architecture and decoration, but the carvings are not gilded, and the weathered teak wood has assumed a delightful grey colour. There are no outside walls to the compound, no gateways nor guardians; so, as there was no one to say us nay, my lady friend and myself boldly entered the monastery.

Though vowed to a life of celibacy and austerity, forbidden to touch money, and fed only by the hand of charity, the monks are expressly allowed to live in fine buildings should they be presented to them. This kioung or monastery, given by Queen Supayah Lat as a propitiation for her many sins, is truly a palace. Gilded and embossed with glass mosaics, it gives a very different view of monastic life than the poverty-stricken and dilapidated kioungs seen in the villages of the jungle. We passed through the lofty rooms, furnished only with a few mats, into the central hall, where a statue of Buddha sits in the gloom of the seven-storied roof. Tall red columns of teak, gilded and inlaid with glass mosaics, support the lofty roof.

Every inch of the building is carved, painted, and decorated. Yellow-robed monks are lying or sitting on mats, engaged in learning Pali texts, in talking to one another, in idling, embroidering little mats, or teaching novices. There are no obvious signs of hard study nor of penitential self-denial. A life of reposeful leisure is being idly and innocently lived in a golden palace of poverty.

Hearing the sound of voices proceeding from one of the carved wooden buildings in the compound, we entered, and found the monks engaged in the pious task of teaching boys, who were lying, knees and elbows on the ground, reading from manuscripts written on lacquered and gilded palm leaves, and shouting their lessons at the top of their voices. A novice cannot become a monk till he is twenty years of age. The ceremony of ordination takes place in an exquisite little carved building called the Dragon Pagoda, which is situated in the compound of a kioung where the carvings are even more splendid than at the Queen's Golden Kioung. There are an endless number of monasteries, pagodas, and rest-houses for pilgrims in Mandalay, but most of them are falling rapidly into ruin.

The holy Mandalay Hill is within the city bounds. It is literally covered with sacred fanes. At the summit of the hill stood a colossal statue of Buddha, with raised arm and with finger pointing towards the city: at its foot once stood the "Incomparable Pagoda," an immense temple, suggested probably by the pagodas of Pagahn. It was a square building, of noble proportions and dazzling white colour. Seven diminishing roofs culminated in a square tower. The roof of the vast hall was supported by teak columns, springing in a straight line 100 feet from floor to ceiling, and in the centre was a single colossal statue of Buddha. All travellers speak of the impressive beauty of this temple. It was destroyed by fire five years ago, leaving only the charred teak columns and

THE FOUR HUNDRED AND FIFTY PAGODAS OF THE LAW.

the white walls to testify to the capacity of the Burmans to produce works of art in the reign of King Theebaw.

Close by is a miniature town of 450 pagodas, each of which contains an alabaster table of the law and the statue of a phongyee praying. In the centre is the Pagoda of Royal Merit, by means of which "the War Prince," King Theebaw's uncle, trusted to purchase eternal happiness.

On the other side of the town, in a suburb midway between Mandalay and Amaurapoora, is the Arakan Pagoda. This is the most holy place, and all day long a crowd of worshippers is to be seen kneeling before the great brass statue of Gautauma, repeating with fervent devotion his great precepts and commandments. The building is incomplete, but when finished, it will be in the most gorgeous Burmese style. The brass statue is of great interest. Cast in Arakan about the year 180 A.D., it has always been regarded with extreme reverence. Many attempts were made by the kings of Burma to get possession of the statue, and military expeditions were made into Arakan for this purpose, but without avail, and it was not till 1784 that King Bodoahpra captured the statue and had it conveyed across the Taluk Pass to Amaurapoora. It is said to have been cast in one piece, which is doubted, but the statue is so plastered with gold-leaf—the offerings of the pious—that it is impossible to see the original metal. In the covered ways leading to the pagoda are the stalls of a bazaar, where curious purchases are to be made, and where beggars, lepers, and naked children leave one no peace. Outside in the blazing sun is a pool where the sacred turtles come, when called, to be fed with biscuits.' All around the ground is covered with pagodas and monasteries.

More attractive to a Western perhaps than these religious monuments are the streets, with their ceaseless, varied, and picturesque life—the grey dusty roads often literally ablaze with the splendid colour of costume. Nothing more brilliant

can be seen than the dresses both of men and women on a holiday or festival day. In the open houses and workshops all the trades and occupations of the people can also be studied. There sits a woman weaving a brilliant damask, not by means of the noisy Jacquard loom, but by deftly passing a hundred shuttles in and out of the silken warp; close by are women winding dyed silk yarn on bamboo wheels, while naked children play around, and the men sit contentedly by, idly chatting and smoking big cheroots. In that shop they are cutting out and embroidering clogs; in another the yellow robes of phongyees hung out to dry proclaim the worker's trade to be that of a dyer; in one street all the men are engaged in hammering out and gilding pagoda htees, and in another in making teak boxes, guaranteed to protect clothes and paper from the ubiquitous white ant. As the evening draws in, preparations are made for pwés or plays, which are held in the streets and open places, and all night long the happy-hearted people will sit on their heels listening to the din of the drums and cymbals, and watching the posturing of the dancers.

The native cab of Mandalay has been called a dog-kennel on wheels. It is entered in front, and is drawn at a smart pace by a couple of small humped cattle. It was in such a cart that King Theebaw was conveyed from his palace to the river. The country carts are boat-shaped and graceful in outline. In wet weather they are furnished with a bamboo hood, from out of the shadow of which often look the laughing faces of women crowned with flowers, and bright-eyed children. The carts which bring in farm produce have solid stone wheels, which are heard long before they are seen from the groaning and creaking of the axles. This creaking of the wheels is encouraged, as it is thought that the mischievous sprites of the forest are thereby driven away.

The bazaar or market in Mandalay is a place of never-failing interest. It is of wide extent, and is all day long thronged

with buyers. Here may be purchased damask silk tameins and pasohs, monster green cheroots, lacquer betel-boxes, grass and silver ear-tubes, amber charms, gongs which when struck emit a very pure musical tone, marionette dolls, embroidered clogs, &c. The women at the stalls are neatly and gaily dressed, but the girls in charge of the jewellery stalls are magnificent. With faces whitened with orris powder, and with the great holes in the lobes of their ears filled with rosettes of diamonds and rubies, they answer the questions of the globe-trotter with an air of supreme indifference, but if he means business, they are willing, nevertheless, to sell the jewelled ear-tubes out of their ears.

A SHAN TRADER.

Life is free in the bazaar. Shan merchants, in their big sun-hats and blue trousers, jostle the silk-draped daughters of Burma; naked boys torment everybody; women are publicly engaged in clearing the long black tresses of their

sisters from vermin, and tiny children are learning the delights of smoking. I remember seeing a proud father attempt again and again to make his one-year-old baby take a pull at a green cheroot, nearly as big as himself. But the one-year-old was too young; a Burmese child only begins to smoke when it can walk.

Down by the river-bank the scene is one of the most ceaseless activity. The water is crowded with craft; high-prowed Burmese fishing-boats rub sides with the floats and steamers of the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company; women are washing clothes or bathing, children shouting and playing, coolies rushing hither and thither, and above the dust and the din shines the hot sun of the tropics.

Notwithstanding his shortcomings, King Theebaw was popular, and strange as it may seem, Mandalay deplores the loss of its king and his royal state, and still more the loss of the royal bounty. Thousands of poor were fed by the largesse of the King: these people were employed by the English Government in road-making during the acute distress which prevailed after the collapse of the monarchy. For centuries the Burmans have been accustomed to hold their King in the deepest reverence as the head of the nation. Court etiquette was a fine art, pageants were part of the popular pleasures, and the King's presence at the fêtes of boat-racing or elephant-taming made gala days. Notwithstanding the occasional massacres and murders within the royal stockade, the people of Mandalay had, they contend, a good time. Pwés were given every evening, boat-races and football competitions were held constantly, and gay-heartedness was characteristic of the people. The monarchy fell, and the English possessed Mandalay. A new city has sprung up on the old rectangular plan in the suburbs outside the moated walls; the roads extend for miles and are lit with street lamps. Pigs and dogs, the only scavengers in the olden days, have given place to a

drainage system, and police patrol the streets and protect property from dacoits. For all these improvements the people are taxed; taxed, they say, for lighting streets to enable the English to go to their evening parties when the natives go to sleep; to make roads for the carriages of the English, while the old cart tracks were good enough for their own bullock gharries: they complain that they are not allowed by the police to set up a temporary booth in the street, and have a pwé whenever they please, and they remember regretfully the bounteous liberality, the gorgeous ceremonials, and the gilded palaces of their kings.

Upper Burma has not yet got used to European ways and methods of government. True, the villagers are protected from the lawless depredations and atrocious cruelties of the dacoits; life and property are safe; governors or "province eaters," as they were euphoniously called, can no longer squeeze those who have money or goods; rice fetches a much better price; more land is being brought under cultivation; railways are opening up the country; the vast fires which used to devour whole cities are prevented;—all these results of English rule the people admit, but they still persistently aver that they are poorer, and that they grow poorer and poorer. The rupee no longer buys what it used to buy; money now leaves the country and goes to England and India; whereas in the King's time the revenue remained in the country, and even the very poor are now taxed, instead of being fed as heretofore by royal bounty. The English trader's object is to make money to send it home, and to get away as soon as he has made his "pile": the aim of the Indian Government is to make Burma, its richest province, contribute largely towards an empty exchequer. It is not without reason the Burmans say, "We are getting poorer:" the Englishman, the Chinaman, and the Madrassee are gradually coming to possess the land, and unless the happy-go-lucky Burman learns

to toil, to struggle, and to fight, he will inevitably be crowded out. His views, that the bounteous earth supplies food enough for all her sons, and that to get through life with as little labour and as much laughter as possible is the true philosophy, that to strive after wealth and possessions is pure folly engendering care, are out of date, and will not hold their ground side by side with those of the Britisher, whose object is to get, to gain, and to hold. Poor Burma! As one careless-minded [1] nation after another disappears from this world, as the Japanese and the Burmese cease to laugh, learn to toil, and pluck at the tree of knowledge of nineteenth-century civilisation, our regrets unavailingly follow them.

[1] There is no word in the English language to express the state of mind attained by the Burmese and Japanese; that absence of the sense of care which results from the absence of unnecessary possessions and the desire to "get on"; that uncomplaining acceptance of misfortune which is the consequence of the unbelief in accumulated "karma"; that conviction that it is better to laugh than to weep, better to share than to possess, better to have nothing and to be free of care than to have wealth and to bend under its burdens. We English do not know the condition, and therefore have no word to express a life and mind free of care. The French *sans souci* is nearer the mark than our *careless*.

CHAPTER IV

THE RUINED CITY OF AMAURAPOORA

AS the traveller is carried by railway from Mandalay to Rangoon, he is when a few miles beyond Mandalay hurried swiftly through the very midst of a crowd of stately pagodas. Monster yellow griffins, with goggle eyes and red tongues, start from amongst the over-grown jungle close beside the iron road, and graceful bell-shaped pinnacles, crowned by golden htees, rise one beyond the other as far as the eye can reach. These are the ruins of the royal city of Amaurapoora, which was founded by the fourth son of the conqueror Alompra in 1783. Here the Burmese kings held royal state for three-quarters of a century, and here Symes and Phayre sojourned when on their respective missions to the Court of Ava in 1795 and 1856.

Abounding in wealth, in magnificent temples, and golden palaces, Amaurapoora was twice forsaken owing to a royal caprice. Just before the second Burmese war the King moved his court to Ava, but fifteen years later Amaurapoora again became the royal city. It was finally abandoned when the King, Mindohn Min, resolved to build a new royal city at Mandalay. It is said that this last exodus was brought about by a tiger having got loose from his cage and escaped into the streets. This was considered a portent foretelling the desolation of the city; so, to propitiate the powers of evil, the King hastened to quit a city of ill-omen, and gave instructions that Mandalay, six miles to the north, should be built forthwith. The people had orders to remove their houses to the new site,

and Amaurapoora was left to the ruin which most surely and quickly overtakes everything in a country where a heavy rainfall and a scorching sun induce the rapid growth of jungle.

The walled city of Amaurapoora differed little in form and construction from the type which has served as a model for royal cities in Burma from time immemorial. A perfectly square city was surrounded by battlemented walls about twelve feet in height and a mile in length. In each wall were eleven bastions and three gates, and on the outer side was a wide moat filled with water. The streets were laid parallel to the walls and cut the city into rectangular blocks. The royal palace, the arsenal, the treasury, the council chamber, the palace of the Lord White Elephant, were in the centre, surrounded by a stockade and two walls. A large square pagoda stood at each angle of the city walls, and temples, kioungs, granaries, the courts of justice, and the palaces of the princes were the only buildings which rose above the dead level of the one-storied bamboo houses built on piles. Colonel Yule describes the streets as very wide, and in dry weather tolerably clean, though dogs were the only scavengers.

Only one angle of the walls was washed by a branch of the Irrawaddy, but at flood-time a chain of shallow but extensive lakes, situated on the north, south, and east of the city, were filled by the rising of the river. The suburbs of Amaurapoora, which were more conveniently placed for trade and for pleasure than the walled city, extended for long distances along the shores of these lakes. At certain times of the year the scene is described as very gay, the banks were covered with splendid religious buildings, and the waters were crowded with craft of various kinds. On one of the lakes was the Water-palace of the King, from which he used to watch the races of the finely carved and splendidly manned war-boats. These lakes were dammed by broad and solidly

constructed bunds, and were connected with the city by causeways and bridges, often of extraordinary length.

Beside the roads leading to the suburbs were built kioungs of great beauty and extreme richness of decoration. Snakes and dragons, scaled with green mirror-mosaic, glittered in the sunshine on the golden parapets, and Nats, dancing in jewelled garments, embellished the balustrades, while every carved pinnacle was crowned with its golden htee and bells. After describing these buildings as he saw them in their glory in 1856, Colonel Yule says, "It is impossible to look at these kioungs without a feeling of wonder how a people so deficient in all domestic appliances could be capable of designing and executing such exquisite workmanship. And one despairs of being able to exhibit to visitors from such a people, in any of our Anglo-Indian cities at least, works which they are likely to appreciate as indicative of our superior wealth and resources."[1]

When one reads of the archaic art, the splendid architectural conception, and the Oriental magnificence of Burma, and still more of the efforts made by the King, Mindohn Min, to reform the government of the country and to rule justly, one cannot help wishing that Burma had been enabled to become a Burmese nineteenth-century power, in the same way as Japan, and had indeed been willing to learn of Europe as much as was necessary for external defence and internal development, but had still remained essentially Burmese and Buddhist in ideas, customs, and government. A harsh discordant note is struck by the railroad running through the very gardens of the temples of Amaurapoora, by the presence of British cantonments in the walled cities, and by the click of the billiard ball in the Audience Hall of kings. Even the English Govern-

[1] In reference to the latter remark, it is interesting to recall that last year, when the Burmese troop of artisans, from the Empire of India Exhibition, were conducted to Windsor to see the Queen, they expressed great surprise that Windsor Castle, the palace of the Empress of India, was not gilded!

ment schools, which turn out native clerks in thousands, are not so harmonious to the *zeitgeist* of the country, as the leisurely teaching by shaven monks of the great moral precepts of the law in the sonorous Pali language.

Amaurapoora exercised a strange charm over me, and I went again and again to explore and to sketch its ruined temples, to sit beside its great lake, and to reconstruct in imagination its gorgeous past. The scene even now from the shore of the lake is fascinating. Massive ruined temples standing among groves of tamarind, palm, and peepul trees are reflected in the placid water, and in the far distance are seen the graceful lines of the Ruby-mine mountains.

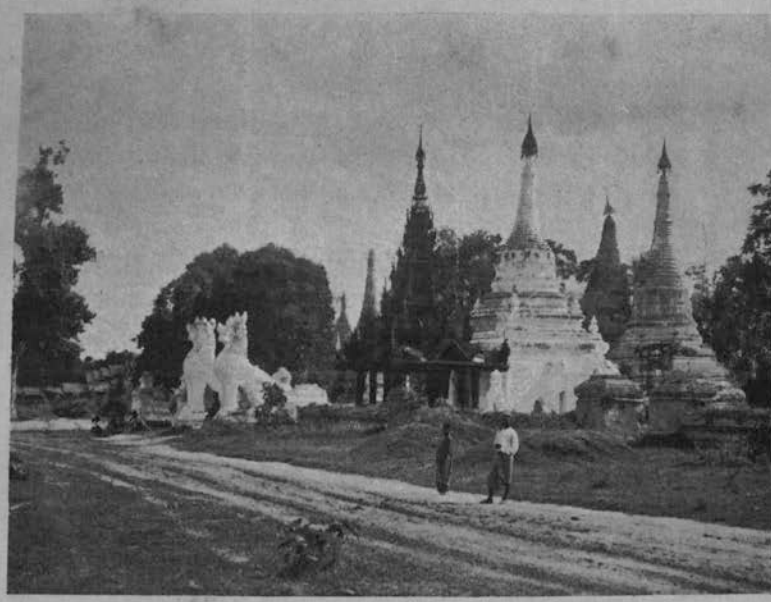
The city stood on a wide plain. The outer walls and moat are easily made out. After crossing these, the road leads over open ground covered with jungle growth, from which rise the ruins of great buildings on either side. Some are square and of red brick, others bell-shaped; there are great gateways leading to ruins which recall the baths of Caracalla at Rome, tall silvered poles are still surmounted by the Brahminy goose, and monster griffins guard shapeless masses. Among the pagodas rises one taller and statelier than the rest; this is the great white Pato'-dau-gyi, the St. Paul's of Amaurapoora.

The jungle throws its pall of green over the site of busy streets and golden palaces, and is now the haunt of deadly snakes. On my going, the first day I was at Amaurapoora, into the vestibule of a ruined temple to see three statues of Buddha which stand under a canopy in solemn draperies of black and gold, I was warned to be careful where I trod, as the place was full of cobras. The idea was not pleasant, but being anxious to make some more sketches, I returned alone to Amaurapoora the next day. I had mounted my easel, and was steadily at work sketching in pastels a group of pagodas and griffins, surrounded only, as I thought, by naked children, when I was startled by hearing a voice behind me say, "What

for you photograph Burmese pagodas?" I turned round, and saw a young Burman, dressed in a pink silk pasoh and turban.

"You speak English?" I said, glad to find some one who could answer questions about the ruins.

"Yes, I am one of Dr. Mark's boys."



PAGODAS AND SPHINXES.

After watching me draw for some time with great interest, he exclaimed, "How easy!" and then, "Would you like to go into the pagodas?"

"Yes," I replied, "I should like to very much, but I am told the temples are full of cobras, and I am afraid to go in."

"Ah! all English afraid of cobras; Burmans not afraid;

Burmans charmed. I am charmed; I not afraid; you safe with me."

"How you charmed?" I asked, falling into the pigeon English.

"So," he said, showing me some tattoo marks on his wrist. "I hold up my hand; cobra go away; cobra can't bite me. All snakes gone in the earth at daytime, come out at night."

"What is there to see in the temples?" I asked.

KNEELING FIGURE FROM A TEMPLE AT AMAURAPOORA.

"Oh! fine; you go with me?"

"Very well," I said; "I go directly I done my sketch."

After packing up my sketching utensils, I prepared to explore the ruins of what I was told was the temple of Kuji. I passed with my barefooted Burmese guide under the tumbledown roofs of a long passage, which conducted us into a spacious vaulted hall, at the end of which, on a raised platform, sat a colossal statue of Buddha, with two kneeling figures in the attitude of adoration on either side. At a lower level was a beautiful statue, about nine feet high, of Buddha standing, with the right hand raised in benediction. The gold-leaf had been washed off by the rains, and the black lacquer underneath was exposed; the edge of the draperies was set with glass mosaics. We wandered through the halls and vestibules of the temple. In every nook were figures in alabaster and wood, but the standing statue of Buddha beneath the altar in the great hall was still the finest. I returned to it.

THE RUINS OF THE KUJI TEMPLE.

From a Pastel Sketch by the Author

Can buy?" at last I asked my guide.

"Yes, can buy," he replied.

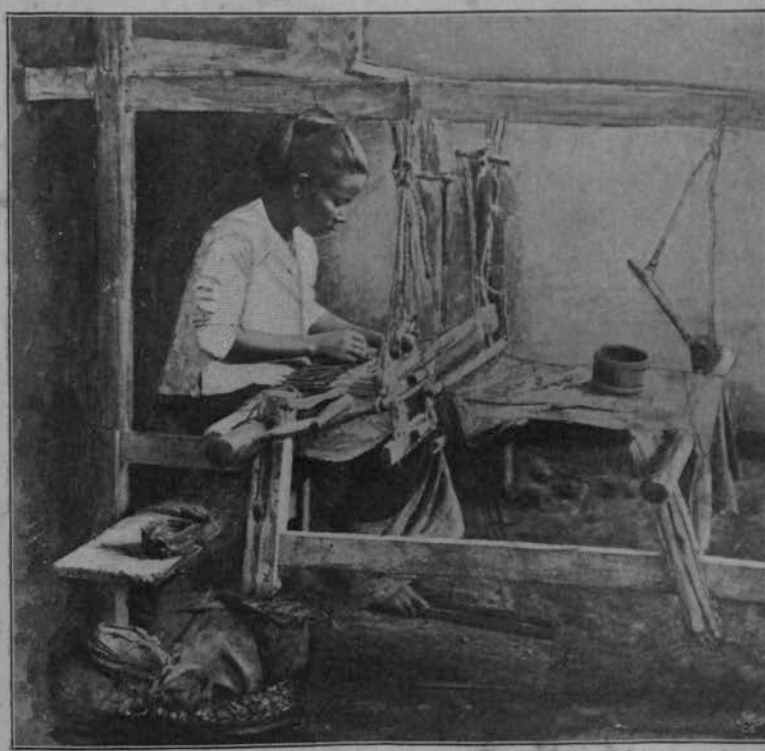
On leaving the temple, I went and sat by the lake, where Moung Tso, my guide, introduced me to Moung Dho, who, he said, would arrange to remove and pack the statue of Buddha, which I had contracted to buy out of the roofless and ruined temple.

I returned to Mandalay delighted with my day's work. I had made three sketches and had contracted to buy a genuine Buddha out of a ruined pagoda.

The temples still drew me with a strange fascination, and I went alone again the next day to Amaurapoora, determined to try and find Moung Tso and to further explore the ruins. I shrank from entering them without the protection from cobras vouchsafed by my charmed guide. I took a gharry and drove over the common, past the great ruins on the main road, and turning into a shady lane, I got out of the carriage and went down the lane on my quest. I knew but one word of Burmese and that was "Mahla" (how do you do?), and the name of my guide; so to everybody I met I said, "Mahla, Moung Tso." I was looked at with wondering curiosity, but presently a young Burman in pink silk, whom I addressed in the same way, nodded in a friendly fashion and gesticulated as if he understood; he then mounted on the box of the gharry and drove away.

In the lane were a number of cottages beautifully made of plaited bamboo. They were built on the ground, and not on piles, which showed that the inhabitants were Manipurians, and not Burmans. These people are the descendants of the Manipurians who were carried away captive by King Bodoahpra. They have ever since followed the occupation of weavers, and it is the Manipurian weavers of Amaurapoora who make the most beautiful of the silk damasks which are worn by the Burmese women. Under the green shadow of papaya and

palm trees, women were winding and spinning bright-coloured silks on spindley bamboo wheels, chattering and singing as they worked. Beneath thatched shelters, placed against the



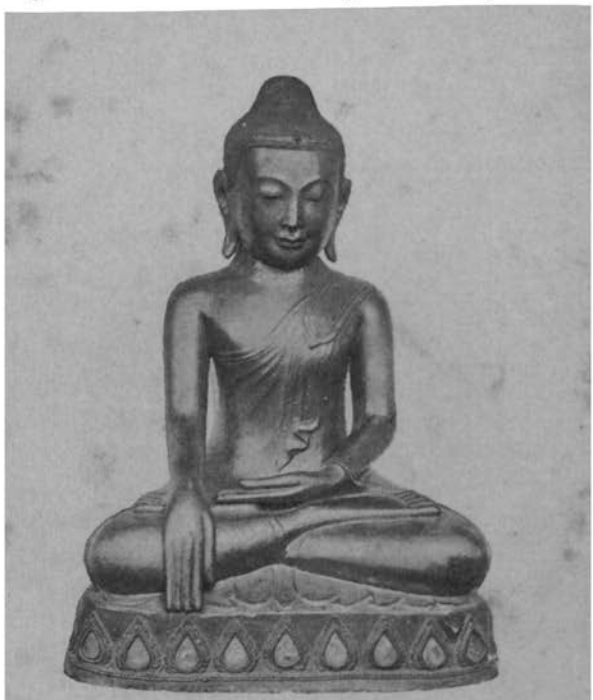
A GIRL WEAVING SILK DAMASK.

toylike houses, girls were busy with numerous tiny shuttles, weaving damasks of crimson and pink, or blue and green, with silver. I never saw cottage industries carried on under more ideal conditions. I sat down outside one of the largest of the cottages, to the delight of its occupants, and carried on a lively

conversation with them by means of signs. They cheerfully showed me all the implements of their work—the winders and the spinning-wheels surmounted by little figures of Nats to bring good luck, the twisting frames worked by two men and the primitive looms, and I was taken all over the roomy cottage, and shown with pride the pictures from the *Illustrated London News* and the *Graphic*, with which the walls were decorated. My clothes and trinkets were then all carefully examined by the merry-eyed, good-natured, and well-mannered women, and by the time the gharry returned with my unknown friend in pink silk, who brought Moung Tso, whom I was seeking, my hosts and I had become good friends.

I told Moung Tso that I wished to explore the Kuji temple still more, and had therefore sent for him to be my guide. He was politely willing, so again we passed up the ruined passage into the hall under the dome, where the great Buddha sat on the raised altar, waiting for worshippers that never came. Aided by my guide, I explored every nook of the great mass of ruins, and for an hour or more we wandered from one spacious hall to another, down long corridors and into open courtyards. Again and again we pulled open creaking carved doorways, to be startled by the gleaming white face and uplifted hand of a Gautauma standing in the sacred recess. Indeed, in every hall, in every niche, sat or stood the solemn Buddhas, carved in marble, in alabaster, in wood, with gilt and glass be-jewelled garments, twenty, thirty feet high, monoliths defying Time's decaying hand; or they lay prone, dying Buddhas, fifty feet long. The carved gables of the temples were falling down, the roofs were generally gone; the monster lion temple guardians started up suddenly with staring eyes and fierce faces from among the abundant green undergrowth; all was ruin except the silent steadfast Gautaumas, that seemed to bear passive witness to the desolation of the sacred places

induced by the alien race which now possesses the ancient land of Buddha. In King Theebaw's time the temples of Amaurapoora were kept in repair, and where ten years ago prayers were fervently uttered and praises were constantly sung, the silence is now only broken by the hiss of



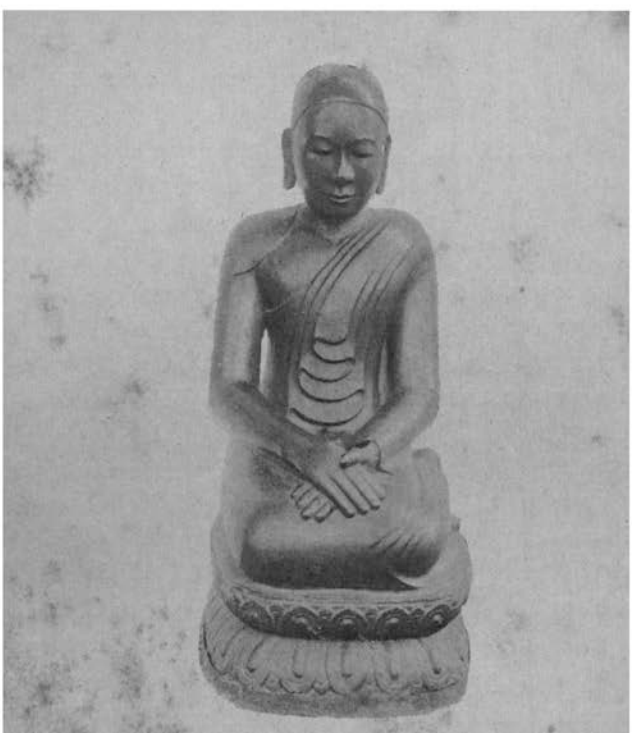
A SITTING BUDDHA.

the cobra, the cooing of the turtle-dove, and the call of the tucktoo.

In the woods I came across a kioung with splendidly carved eaves and balconies falling into ruin. Outside an old monk was standing, fondling with evident delight and affection a little one-year-old baby—a foundling, I was told,

who would be brought up in the monastery. As I walked along to reach the gharry, I mused how kingdoms may rise and fall, how governing races may succeed one another, and stately religions with sumptuous temples may rise into power and fall into oblivion, but that human nature remains the same, and that the old monk fondling the little child among the ruins of royal Amaurapoora represents what is most real and lasting in life.[1]

[1] I should add that I never received the Buddha from the Kuji Temple.



A YAHANDAT, OR SERVITOR OF BUDDHA.

CHAPTER V

THE FANES OF PAGAHN

AS numerous as the pagodas of Pagahn" is a favourite phrase in Burma to express a number which cannot be counted. Between Prome and Sagaing, and on the same side of the river as the latter, there are the ruins of a vast city, extending for no less than nine miles along the river-bank, and for two or three miles inland. These ruins testify that Pagahn was a city of great magnificence, and though in the chronicles of Burma its power was doubtless magnified, there are sufficient evidences to prove that in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries Pagahn was the centre of a strong monarchy, and exercised a profound religious influence.

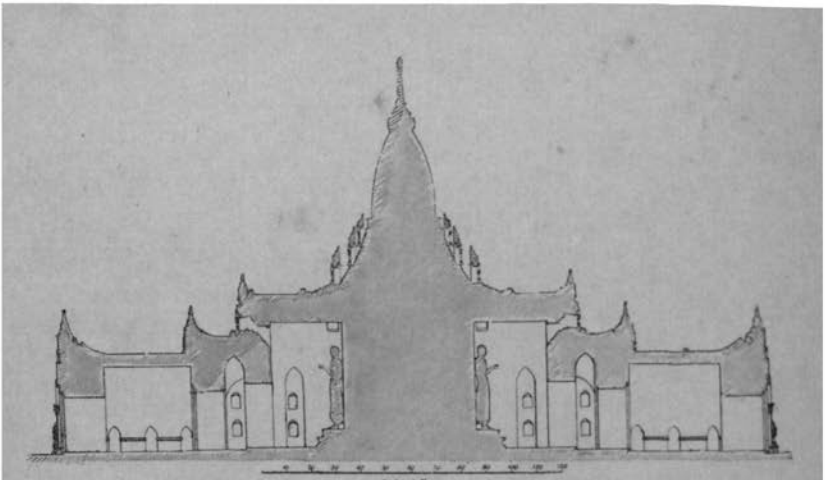
It is much to be regretted that at the present time opportunities are not given travellers to visit Pagahn. For the want of such opportunities the temples, which are as wonderful, in their way, as the Pyramids of Egypt or the Cathedrals of the Middle Ages, are scarcely ever visited by European travellers. As no trade is to be done in a ruined city, the steamers of the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company do not stop there; and as tourists and "globe-trotters" have not yet discovered the unique beauties of Upper Burma, there are at present no hotels or dak bungalows at Pagahn at which the traveller can stay. I earnestly hope, now that the marvellous ruins of Pagahn have come under the care of the British Government, steps will be taken, not only to preserve them from decay, but that competent persons will be sent to Burma to picture and describe them in detail. I can give my readers but a

slight idea of the splendid conception, the originality of design, and the massive architecture of these relics of a bygone time of greatness. A few of the pagodas have been restored and gilded by the munificence of some of the Burmese kings, and are still used as temples for religious services. In many cases, however, restoration has been destructive of the delicate work of the mural decorations, of which the beauty of the details astonishes all who have had the opportunity of examining them. The finest temples, which, from the correctness of the principles of their architecture and the massiveness of their construction, have best withstood the ravages of time and of the climate, are those built between the years 1057 and 1227 A.D.

The Ananda is the oldest of the temples. It was erected about the middle of the eleventh century by Kyansittha, King of Pagahn. It suggests, as Yule[1] remarks, "strange

[1] Colonel Yule is the chief English authority on the temples of Pagahn, which he visited in 1856 and described and pictured in his "Mission to Ava" in 1858. I have therefore quoted him freely in this account of the temples, which, to my great regret, I had not the opportunity of visiting myself when in Burma, owing to the fact that the steamers do not call at Pagahn, and that I could not prevail upon the manager of the Irrawaddy Flotilla Co. to make a special exception in my favour, and give me the opportunity I so earnestly desired of exploring the ruins. Yule says: "Pagahn surprised us all. None of the preceding travellers to Ava had prepared us for remains of such importance and interest." The early travellers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries do not mention Pagahn; Symes, Cox, and Crawfurd paid short visits to the temples and give cursory accounts of what they saw; Fergusson in his "Indian and Eastern Architecture" (1878) quotes Yule's "Mission to Ava" and borrows his illustrations, saying, "As almost all the particulars here mentioned are taken from this work as the latest and best, it will not be necessary to repeat references at every page." Nothing of any importance has been published on the Pagahn temples since Yule gave his classic account, now nearly forty years ago, and I thoroughly endorse what Fergusson says as to the need of further investigation into the antiquities of Burma. After giving due credit to the labours of Symes, Crawfurd, and Yule, he writes, "But what they did was done in the intervals they were able to snatch from pressing public duties. What is really wanted is that some qualified person should take up the subject specially, and travel through the country with no other object than to investigate its antiquities. With the knowledge we now have, six months spent on such a mission ought to tell us all we now want to know." This was written in 1878; since then Upper Burma has been annexed,

memories of the temples of Southern Catholic Europe." It is built in the form of a Greek cross. On the outer side are corridors 200 feet long, in the centre of which are immense gabled porticoes (see annexed plan). Above are six terraced, diminishing, and convex roofs, ending at the



PLAN OF THE ANANDA.

centre with a mitre-like spire crowned by a golden htee. Within the outer corridor is a second; these intercommunicate and are lit by passages at right angles, at the outer end

and the ruins of Pagahn, Sagaing, and Tagoung are now under British protection. If the Government would send out such an expert as Fergusson suggests to examine, photograph, and describe the great architectural remains that still exist in Burma, a work of much value to the students of architecture, archæology, and history would be accomplished. I sincerely hope it will be done. If this is not feasible, the formation of a Burma Exploration Fund may perhaps be hoped for. If such were formed, and powers obtained from the Government to dig and explore the ancient cities of Tagoung, Thahtun, Tharekhettara, and Pagahn, very valuable finds would probably be the result. Great care would, of course, be taken not to wound the religious sensibilities of the people; but all the cities mentioned are, except Pagahn, given over to the dominion of the jungle, and their temples are no longer used as places for religious worship.

of every one of which is a window. In the solid centre of the building, and at the end of each of the wide transverse corridors which lead up from the porticoes, stands a colossal figure of Buddha, thirty or forty feet high. These statues are four in number, and represent Kauk-kathan, Gawnagohng, Kathapa, and Gautauma, the four incarnations of absolute holiness venerated by the Buddhists. The statues vary slightly in size and gesture, but they are all in the attitude either of prayer or benediction. Each figure stands facing the porch and entrance, on a great carved lotus pedestal, within rails, like the chancel rails of an English church. There are gates to each of these chambers, noble frames of timber rising to a height of four-and-twenty feet; the frame bars are nearly a foot in thickness, and are richly carved on the surface in undercut foliage; the panels are of latticework, each intersection of the lattice being decorated with a gilt rosette.[1]

The lighting of these image-chambers is perhaps the most singular feature of the whole building. The lofty vault, nearly fifty feet high, under which the statue stands, canopied by a valance of gilt metal curiously wrought, reaches up into the second terrace of the upper structure, and a window pierced in this sends a light from far above the spectator's head, and from an unseen source, upon the head and the shoulders of the great gilded image. The effect is said to be startling and impressive in the highest degree. "The devotee passes through long dim corridors, where his foot falls soft on the mouldy pavement, and the smell is of a charnel-house, and there is silence throughout the whole vast temple, broken only by the eerie chant of a fellow-worshipper far away through the passages, and suddenly he comes on the chapel, and sees before him the sad, tranquil face, with a glory shed over it, and the hand stretched out as if in warning or benediction."[2]

[1] Yule's "Mission to Ava."

[2] Shway Yoe, "The Burman."

In the galleries are numerous figures of Gautauma, and groups of figures illustrating events in his life, altogether about 1500 in number. The approach to the temple is through a street of Phongyee-Kioungs, which are splendidly decorated with elaborate carvings. In one of them, a brick building, there are some interesting, though crude, wall-paintings.

The Thapinyu is the second great temple at Pagahn. It

THE GAUDAPALEN TEMPLE, *after Yule.*

was built about the year 1100 A.D. It is 180 feet square, with a massive portico. Two stories of corridors occupy the great basement, from which springs a vaulted hall, crowned by a spire rising to a height of 200 feet. Under the arched roof sits a single colossal statue of Buddha.

The third great temple is called the Gaudapalen, and was erected about the year 1160 A.D. It is a quadrangular building, with heavy porches and terraced roofs, culminating

in a spire 180 feet high. This temple is more symmetrical than the other two, and as it stands on a platform near the river, it is that first seen on approaching Pagahn; from a distance, its glistening white pinnacles and central spire recall Milan Cathedral.

In these temples, Colonel Yule says in his classic description, "there is an actual sublimity of architectural effect which excites wonder, almost awe, and takes hold of the imagination in a manner that renders apology for them as Burmese absurdly out of place."

It is to be remarked that in later and modern Burmese buildings the arch is not found, and it seems as if the Burmese were not acquainted with the principle of its construction. If so, it is only a forgotten art, for in the Pagahn temples of the eleventh and twelfth centuries the pointed arch is found in all of them. The buildings are made of brick, cemented with mud, covered externally with plaster, decorated and enriched with coloured encaustic and incised tiles. The tiles represent rudely modelled groups of figures and animals. In a temple called the Sudha Munee much of the brilliant tile decoration and elaborate plaster-work still exist. The battlemented crown of the parapet is set with large tiles embossed and enamelled in colours, the panels of the basement with smaller tiles in the form of diamonds, rosettes, and other ornamental patterns, and in the flamboyant rays and spires of the pediments, even up to the highest remaining terraces, the tips are composed of pointed glazed white tiles, which must once have given extraordinary lustre and sparkling effect to the elevation.

The plaster-work is generally flamboyant and rich in detail, but the effect in foliage and ornamentation is often produced by very slight indications and incisions in the plastered surface. These incisions have been made with such instinctive art and suggestive skill, that, viewed at a little

distance, the most elaborate modelling could scarcely have produced the desired effect more completely. This old work, slight as it is sometimes, is the rough bold sketch of the accomplished artist. On the ruined walls and doorways of the Sembyo-Koo are seen beautiful examples of flamboyant enrichments of the plaster. In some of the earlier buildings the mouldings and decorations are truly classical in character.

RUINS OF THE SEMBYO-KOO TEMPLE, *after Yule.*

The Dhamayangyee temple was built about 1153 A.D., and is a splendid pile. As the plaster has fallen away, the details of construction are here more apparent, and architects have expressed unfeigned admiration at the perfection of the brick arches. The Thein-ma-het contains a number of paintings of large pictures on the walls.

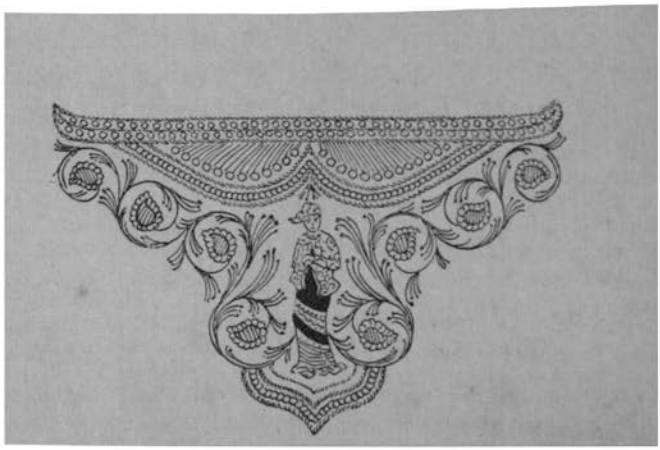
There are also to be seen in Pagahn solid, bell-shaped

pagodas of the Shway Dagohn type, immense recumbent figures of the dying Buddha sheltered under dimly-lit brick sheds, and also Phongyee-Kioungs splendidly carved in bold relief; in fact, the ground for miles is thickly strewn with the ruins of pagodas and shrines of every shape and size.

To exhaust the treasures of wonderful Pagahn is impossible. The imagination tries to reconstruct the city in its greatness from the immense ruins, and in fancy we see the gilded [1] pinnacles rising, numerous as masts in a crowded port, towards the deep blue sky; the temples, enriched with enamelled tiles and glowing with colour, as they stand bathed in the light of the tropical sun; the richly carved and gilded roofs of palace and monastery lifted above the dead level of the low thatched houses of the vast city, which stretched for miles along the banks of the noble river; and musing thus at this apparition of greatness in a semi-barbarous land, we ask, Whence did the Burmese get their art and architecture? From India? It is to be borne in mind that the pointed arch is found in all the temples at Pagahn, and is used not only to span the doorways and porticoes, but to roof the

[1] Marco Polo's account of Mien or Pagahn in the thirteenth century, when Kublai Khan sent his army to conquer the country, must be read with great interest by all students of Burma. It runs:—"And in this city there is a thing so rich and rare that I must tell you about it. You see there was in former days a rich and puissant king in this city, and when he was about to die, he commanded that by his tomb they should erect two towers, one at either end, one of gold and the other of silver, in such fashion as I shall tell you. The towers are built of fine stone, and then one of them has been covered with gold a good finger in thickness, so that the tower looks as if it were all of solid gold; and the other is covered with silver in like manner, so that it seems to be all of solid silver. Each tower is a good ten paces in height and of breadth in proportion. The upper part of these towers is round, and girt all about with bells, the top of the gold tower with gilded bells and the silver tower with silvered bells, insomuch that whenever the wind blows among these bells they tinkle. The tomb likewise was plated partly with gold and partly with silver. The king caused these towers to be erected to commemorate his magnificence and for the good of his soul; and really they do form one of the finest sights in the world, so exquisitely finished are they, so splendid and costly. And when they are lighted by the sun, they shine most brilliantly and are visible from a vast distance."

passages and halls. On this point Fergusson, the great authority on Indian architecture, says that "no Buddhist arch is known to exist in India, except in the reign of Akbar, and hardly a Hindu one in any temple down to the present day." This fact seems to sufficiently dispose of the suggestion that the Burmese of the eleventh and twelfth centuries derived their architecture from India. It is more probable that the square form of pagoda with pointed archways existed in Burma long before the foundation of Pagahn, and an examination of the ruins of Thatun—which was a flourishing city in the fifth century—shows a square pagoda with three diminishing stories, crowned by a circular dome. Mr. Fergusson is inclined to think that this form of temple was derived from Babylonia, and probably reached Burma *via* Thibet by some route now unknown.



CHAPTER VI

TAGOUNG, AVA, AND SAGAING, CITIES OF AVA

TAGOUNG.

TAGOUNG, built by Indian emigrant princes on the west bank of the Irrawaddy, 847 B.C., is the most ancient of the cities of Burma. Here was founded a royal dynasty, which was overthrown by an invasion from Yunnan. A second band of emigrant Kshatriyas, led by Daza Raja, came from Gangetic India and founded the city of Old Pagahn close beside Tagoung. The ruins of these ancient cities remain to this day. As far as the eye can reach, the ground is here covered with the remains of brick buildings, and of several large temples, the whole of which is buried under a thick pall of jungle. The exploration of the ruins of Tagoung and Old Pagahn would doubtless yield rich treasures to the archæologist and the historian. We were unable to visit the ruins, but when we stopped at the village nearest to them on the banks of the Irrawaddy, my husband sent a Burman to dig in the ruins, and on our way back down the river, the man brought us his find, which consisted of a number of hard-baked clay bricks. Each of them bears a stamped image of a sitting Buddha under a trefoil arch; sometimes with attendant figures standing on either side. An inscription in Pali in ancient devanagari character is below the figure. Colonel Phayre says the letters are of the form ascribed to the time of the Guptas, used during the first two centuries of the Christian era, and that there appears no good reason for

concluding that these bricks were made at a later period than when similar letters were in use in India. It has been suggested, he says, that the bricks were made at Gaya and brought thence. If so, this fact would show an early communication between Upper Burma and Gangetic India. It is, however, more probable that workmen from India were

BRICKS FROM TAGOUNG.

brought to make the bricks, or to carve the forms used to stamp them.

Two of these interesting bricks are represented here. The Pali inscription has been kindly read for me at the British Museum, and is translated as follows:—

"The Tathagata declared to be the cause of the qualities that arise from a cause, and the cessation of them. He who thus confesses is a great devotee."

AVA.

Ava is the city which has played the most conspicuous part in the modern history of Burma, and which gave its name to the kingdom in the treaties obtained by foreign embassies. It was founded by King Thadomengbya in 1364, on the left bank of the Irrawaddy. Its classical name was Ratanapura, which means the City of Gems. Ava was laid out on the same plan as the great cities which preceded it—rectangular, walled, with wide, straight, parallel streets, and with the palace, fortress, and treasury in the centre. For two hundred years it was the capital of Upper Burma, but in 1554 it was taken by the great King Bareng Naung and made tributary to Pegu. In the next reign the possession of Ava was contended for by the tributary King and the supreme King in a duel, each monarch being mounted on an elephant, in which singular contest the King of Pegu was victorious. When the empire of Bareng Naung was reconstituted under Thado Dhamma Raja, he quitted the ruined city of Pegu, made Ava his capital, and built in celebration of the event a great pagoda called the Khoung-moo-daw.

In the last efforts made by the Talaings to recover their lost empire, Ava was besieged and burnt to the ground in 1752. When Hsengbynsheng (or Myedu Meng) became King of united Burma, he decided to change his capital from Muthsobo to Ava. The palace was rebuilt, and in April 1766 the King and his court moved into the new city. A htee of pure gold was made at Ava, and placed on the summit of the Shway Dagohn. In the midst of the consequent rejoicings the captive King of Pegu was beheaded. It was noticed that when the old man was led out to execution, he kept in his hand and was constantly turning what seemed to be a piece of clay. It was taken from him, when the clay was found to contain a large ruby of purest water; this stone was afterwards

looked upon as the choicest gem in the possession of the King of Ava.

The terrible King Bodoahpra came to the throne in 1781, but only after many palace intrigues and wholesale murders of his relatives. Sangermano, who was in Ava at the time, states that all the wives and concubines of Zingusa, Bodoahpra's nephew, the former King, were burnt alive with their babes in their arms. An insurrection against the throne headed by a native of a village called Paonga was put down in the most ruthless manner. All the inhabitants of the village were dragged from their homes and burnt alive on an immense pile of wood. After these sanguinary deeds it was declared that Ava had been defiled as a royal residence by the shedding of blood. Consultations were held with the astrologers, and it was decided to build a new city on a site selected by them about eight miles north of Ava. The new royal city was called Amaurapoora, which means the City of Security and Peace. On the 10th of May 1783 Ava was vacated by the King and his court, and the new palace taken possession of in solemn state. On the people showing some reluctance to remove from their pleasant quarters at Ava to the malarial swamps of Amaurapoora, the King returned a week later to Ava, and personally urged and directed the removal of its inhabitants. Thus writes Sangermano, an eye-witness of this act of tyranny: "Vain would it be to describe the sufferings and fatigues, the oppressions and exactions, which this transmigration caused, to those who have not witnessed the extreme rigour with which the royal orders are here executed. No sooner was Amaurapoora inhabited, than Ava, famed not only as the residence of so many kings, but also for its pleasant and convenient situation and the magnificence of its public buildings, was instantly abandoned. Indeed, Badonsachen (Bodoahpra) caused its total destruction, by giving general permission to overthrow at will the superb Bao,

AMIDST THE RUINS OF AMAURAPOORA.

or convents of Talapoins, some of which were gilt all over, within and without, with the finest gold, the magnificent wooden bridges, the public halls and porticoes. All the cocoa trees, which, planted along the interior of the walls, overtopped them with their green shadowy branches, and gave the city a cheerful and sweet prospect, were cut down and given the elephants for food. In fine, part of the walls were torn down by order of the King, and the river being sluiced in, reduced the whole to an uninhabitable pool."

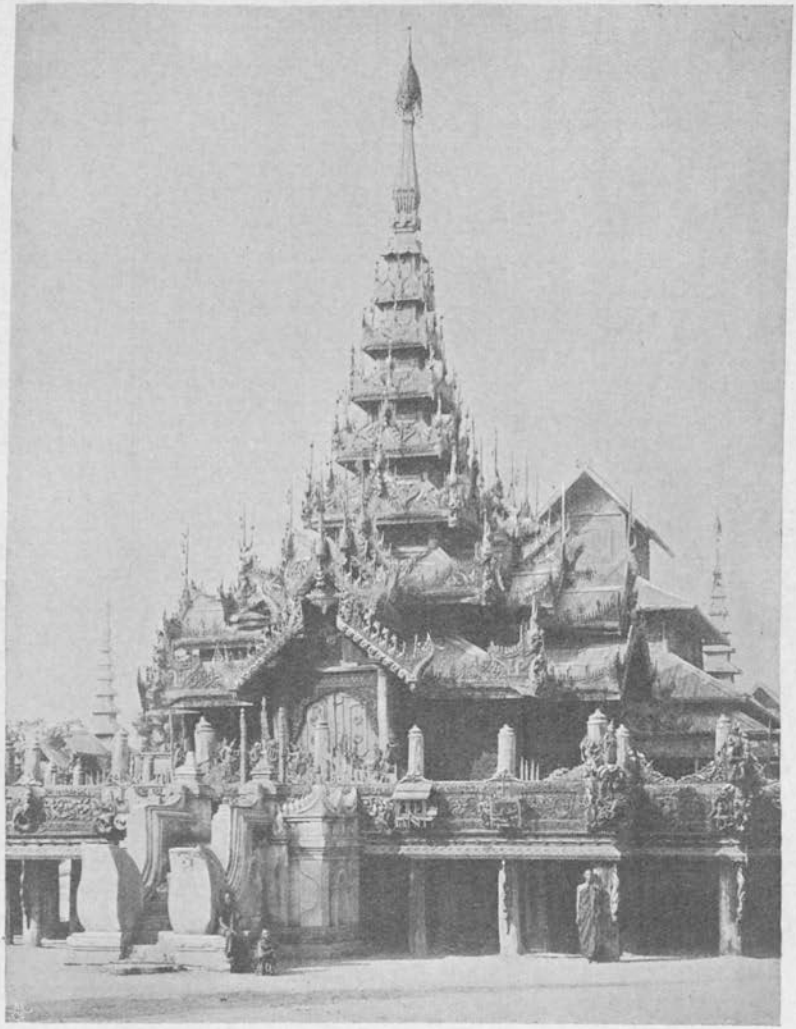
For twenty-four years Bodoahpra pursued his cruel and tyrannical course at Amaurapoora, but he beautified the city, drained its swamps, and turned them into lakes. On his death, his grandson Hpagyidoa succeeded him. A vulture was seen to alight on the spire of the palace, and a fire had also destroyed part of the royal buildings. These evil omens decided the King to quit Amaurapoora and rebuild the city of Ava. In March 1823 the King and Queen took possession of their new golden palace. Mr. and Mrs. Judson, the American Baptist missionaries, were then living in Burma, and the account given by Mrs. Judson's lively pen of the royal entry into Ava brings the scene vividly before us. "I dare not attempt," she says, "to give a description of that splendid day, when majesty, with all its attendant glory, entered the gates of the golden city, and amid the acclamations of millions, I may say, took possession of the palace. The saupwars (chieftains) of the provinces bordering on China, all the viceroys and high officers of the kingdom, were assembled on the occasion, dressed in their robes of state and ornamented with the insignia of their office. The white elephant, richly adorned with gold and jewels, was one of the most beautiful objects in the procession. The King and Queen alone were unadorned; dressed in the simple garb of the country, they, hand in hand, entered the garden in which we had taken our seats, and where a banquet was prepared for their refreshment. All the riches

and glory of the empire were on this day exhibited to view. The number and immense size of the elephants, the numerous horses, and great variety of vehicles of all descriptions, far surpassed anything I have ever seen or imagined."

The spring after this pageant of power and splendour, the English army of invasion had taken Rangoon. Immediately on receipt of the ominous news at Ava, the Europeans resident there received visits from the "spotted men" (executioners), and were told the fateful message, they "were wanted by the King." They were heavily ironed and thrown into prison, and not released until sixteen months had elapsed, when some of them were again wanted by the King, to act as interpreters, and to confer with Sir Archibald Campbell, who was at Yandabo with his victorious army, two days' march from the walls of Ava. In the meantime the city, inflated by vainglorious pride, excited by hurried military preparations, torn by contradictory counsels, was finally struck by dismay when, humbled, beaten and dispirited, the proud King was obliged to seek the aid of his prisoners to get rid of the hated, pale-faced conqueror at his gates.

The following year Mr. Crawfurd went to Ava as envoy from the Indian Government. He describes the great gilded palace, the Hall of Audience, the kioungs and public buildings, which were the counterparts of what had existed in Amaurapoora, and prototypes of those which now remain at Mandalay. Here he was received in audience by the "Golden Foot," who was seated on a throne, dressed in a tunic of gold tissue ornamented with jewels, and crowned with a helmet of pure gold studded with rubies and sapphires, resembling the spire of a pagoda.

But the glory of Ava was short-lived: King Tharawaddy vowed to make it a heap of ruins. Once more Ava was vacated, and in 1837 Amaurapoora became the royal city. Two years later all that remained of the stately buildings of Ava were overthrown by the same terrible earthquake which



A RICHLY CARVED PAGODA.

rent the base of the monster pagoda at Mengohn. In 1856 Colonel Yule visited its site, and thus describes the dismal ruins of the once powerful and splendid city: "The ramparts still stand, though in decay, and the greater part of the interior area is a mere mass of tangled gardens and jungle. A few of the principal streets are still kept, or keep themselves, clear of undergrowth, and the others are traceable as muddy lanes at right angles to each other, but they are silent and untrodden. One large white modern pagoda, built or thoroughly repaired since the earthquake, rises from the thick foliage near the west end of the river face, and is the chief mark of the city to voyagers on the river. Passing a wide ditch and second wall, we entered the inner city, in which the palace stood. Little remains but the mere bases of numerous buildings and platforms of brick-work." Ava has ever since remained a shapeless ruin.

SAGAING.

On steaming up-stream, after leaving the stately ruins of Pagahn, the Irrawaddy widens to the breadth of about two miles and bears away to the south-west. Suddenly the noble river sweeps due west, and at the bend, on steep wooded hills rising from the right bank, stand the glittering white pagodas of Sagaing. No view is more striking and more uniquely Burmese than that of Sagaing from the river. Every hill is crowned by flashing white cupolas, whose gilded spires and htees gleam in the burning sunlight. Long straight flights of white stone steps with high balustrades seam the wooded hills and conduct pilgrims to the sacred fanes on the heights. One great white mass, in the form of a crescent, perched on the summit of a hill about five hundred feet high, to which a broad and stately flight of stone steps leads up from the town, looks most imposing from the river. But however impressive is the view from below, it proves far more attractive to those who, braving the

Burmese sun, toil up the glittering white steps to the platform of the pagoda of the "King's Victory." Beneath flows the broad and placid river, spotted with wooded islands, sweeping northwards till it is lost among the rose-tipped peaks of the Ruby-mine mountains. On the level plain on the opposite bank once stood the splendid city of Ava, now a heap of ruins, the unsightly remains of which are hidden beneath a green garment of jungle. To the left, where the river bends suddenly to the south, are seen the spires of Amaurapoora, dominated by the swelling dome of the Pato-dau-gyi pagoda. The long line of white smoke, winding snake-like among the ruins, testifies to the advent of science, civilisation, and steam in the fallen dominion of the "Golden Foot." The town of Sagaing lies immediately beneath, greatly shrunk from its former extensive walls, and almost buried in the luxuriant growth of umbrageous tamarind trees. Extending for miles from the hill on which we stand, every knoll and point of the wooded hills are surmounted by white pagodas, and every nook shelters a carved phongyee-kioung standing in a grove of plaintain and palm trees. The hills are scarped with paved paths, which lead through the woods from pagoda to pagoda, and the sacred buildings which are perched on the steepest summits are approached by flights of stone steps, in the same way as those overlooking the river. Truly this is one of the most beautiful, extraordinary, and interesting views the world can show, particularly when seen towards the witching hour of sunset, when land and water and sky are bathed in light and colour which no brush can portray.

The white crescentic building which forms such a striking object when seen from the river is found on nearer inspection to be a kind of cloister, partly cut out of the solid rock and partly built of brick covered with white plaster. Facing a wide platform twenty feet broad are thirty arches, under each of which is a sitting statue of Buddha. The construction of

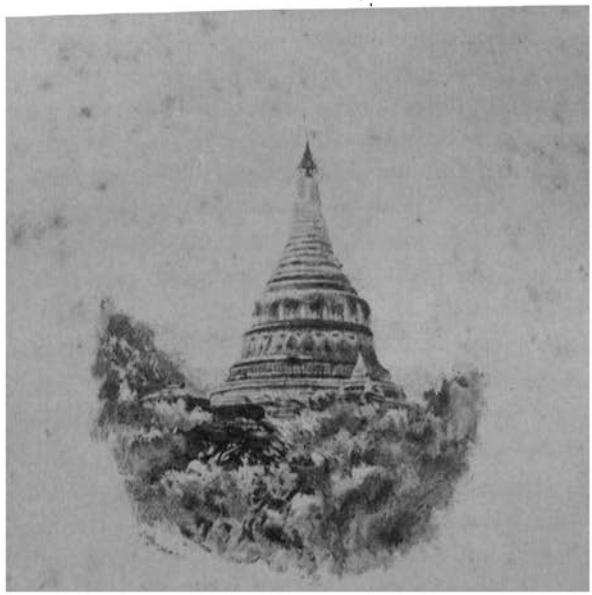
this monument of piety on the summit of the steep hill must have been a work of no small difficulty.

The great Khoung-moo-daw pagoda, built by Thado Dhamma, King of Ava, in the seventeenth century, is situated about six miles from Sagaing. It is interesting in that it differs both from the Shway Dagohn and the Pagahn type of pagoda; indeed, it is nothing more than a tope of great size and comparatively modern construction, and recalls in a remarkable manner the great Indian tope of Sanchi at Bhilsa. A circular bell-shaped dome, perfectly solid and about 100 feet in diameter, is placed on three bases, each one wider than the other. In the lowest are 240 niches, and in every niche is placed a statue of Buddha. A solid htee surmounts the dome, but there is no spire. The base of the pagoda is surrounded by a fence composed of 784 stone pillars about six feet high. They form a square, and in each quadrant stands a carved and gilded gateway. In the upper part of every pillar will be found a depression intended to receive a lamp. The immense dome was probably a mass of gilding in the gorgeous past, and the effect of hundreds of lamps throwing their light on the great golden tope must have been one of those splendid effects which can be seen only in the Orient when uninfluenced by Western ideas of economy. A highly polished and beautifully inscribed white marble slab gives the date of the foundation of the pagoda as 1636. It is stated that in its relic-chamber was placed an image of Buddha for which the King gave his weight in gold, and that here also lies buried the sacred tooth of Buddha, which Bareng Naung received from Ceylon. The Nagayon or Dragon pagoda is a strange conceit. It has a spire fashioned like a monster dragon raising its head above a square tower adorned with decorated arches, similar to those seen in the temples of Pagahn.

Not far from Sagaing are the quarries from which is

obtained the marble used to make the statues of Buddha presented to the pagodas. The Marble Hill rises steeply from the valley and the quarries are on the summit. How such a monolith as the immense marble statue of Buddha which stands at the foot of Mandalay Hill was conveyed by Burmans from these loftily placed quarries is a mystery.

For a short time Sagaing played an important part in the history of Burma. After the fall of Pagahn three Shan chiefs became all-powerful, and the son of one of them, Athenghkara, founded the city and kingdom of Sagaing in 1315. The dynasty only lasted fifty years, and on the rise of Ava Sagaing ceased to be a separate kingdom, but has existed as a holy site of pagodas and sacred fanes ever since.



CHAPTER VII

THAREKHETTARA, PROME, PEGU, AND MAULMAIN, CITIES OF PEGU

Tharekhettara.

HARASSED by marauding tribes from the north, the Indo-Mongolian race who had settled in Tagoung, and were then called Brahma or Mramma, migrated down the valley of the Irrawaddy and founded the city of Tharekhettara in the plain beneath the hill at Prome, about 400 years B.C. This city was overthrown by an incursion of the Talaings from the Delta in the first century of the Christian era. The ruins of the walls of a great city still remain, each wall extending a distance of two and a half miles. In the midst are two immense conical mounds of brick 200 feet high. The name Tharekhettara means "single skin," and the legend is that a favourite wife of the great monarch with three eyes begged of her husband a grant of land, and being asked how much she required, replied as much as the hide of a buffalo would cover. The request was granted, on which she cut the hide into thongs, sewed them together, and claimed as much land as the thongs would encompass. On the ground a city was built, and called Tharekhettara in memory of her craftiness. There is here a sacred well, said to have been dug by the order of the great King Maha Thambawa, the water of which is still given to those whom the people desire to honour.

PROME.

The hill of Prome, situated at the bend of the river, commanding the approaches north and south, was too important a strategetical position not to become a noted fort at the time when the Shan races from the north, the Talaings from the south, and the Burmese, the ancient possessors of the valley of the Irrawaddy, were contending for supremacy. Founded, it is alleged, by Maha Thambawa in 483 B.C., Prome remained a city even after the destruction of the kingdom of Tharekhettara. We have no clear history of this ancient city; it was besieged again and again by contending races, and now and then it figures as the site of some striking event. It was at Prome that Tarukpyemeng, King of Pegu, on his return from Bassein —whither he had fled from the victorious hordes of Kublai Khan—was obliged by his second son to drink a cup of poison; it was at Prome that guns were first mounted on the ramparts in 1404; it was at Prome that Meng Khaung, King of Burma, and Rajadirit, King of Pegu, in the midst of their internecine wars and their efforts to exterminate their respective kingdoms, swore a short-lived friendship under the shadow of the great Shway San-Daw pagoda. A century later Prome was the scene of a brave defence and a cruel sack, when Tabeng Shwehti, in his efforts to establish a great empire of Pegu, laid siege to the city and closely invested it. The defence was undertaken by the courageous Queen of Prome, daughter of the King of Ava and wife to her own nephew. The ramparts were armed with guns, and the besieged awaited the assault of their adversaries with confidence. The attack was made, but the walls of Prome stood firm, and the King of Pegu, wroth at the non-success of his troops, swore that he would cut off the heads of all those commanders who were not wounded. But when the moon went down he was forced to sound a retreat. Great was the slaughter by sword and pestilence of the besiegers, "amongst

whom were five hundred Portugals, having no other burial than the bodies of vultures and crows and such like birds of prey, which devoured them all along the coast where they lay." [1]

A great platform was now built to command the city from a height, to make which 10,000 date trees were cut down. On this terrace were mounted eighty pieces of ordnance, which incessantly battered the city. A council of despair was held within the walls of Prome; six thousand valiant men vowed to anoint themselves with the oil from the lamps of the chapel of the god of battles and to either die or conquer in an attack on this terrace. Sallying forth from the two gates nearest the terrace, and "taking courage from their despair and resolution to die, they fought so valiantly, that in less than half-an-hour the whole camp was put in disorder, the terrace gained, the fourscore pieces of cannon taken, the King himself hurt, the pallisado burnt, the trenches broken, and the Xeminbrum, (general of the army) slain."

The King of Pegu was so enraged at this disaster, which he attributed to the negligence of some of his captains in guarding the terrace, that "he caused two thousand Peguans to be beheaded who had stood sentinel that night."

But the bravery of the defenders availed nothing against the treachery of one of their four principal captains, who betrayed the devoted city to the King in return for the promise of the revenue of a province, and the gate which he commanded was opened to the enemy. "The city was delivered up, the inhabitants all cut to pieces, without so much as sparing one, the King and Queen made prisoners, their treasures taken, the buildings and temples demolished, and many other inhumanities exercised, with such outrageousness, the belief whereof is beyond the imagination and thought of man; and truly I never represent unto myself in what manner it was done, as having seen it with my own eyes, but that I remain as it were astonished

[1] Pinto.

and beside myself at it," says Pinto, the chronicler of the siege, and who was one of the "Portugals" in the invading army. "In the bloody ruins of that wretched city," he continues, "the tyrant entered in with great pomp, and at the King's palace he was crowned King of Prome, and he made the young and vanquished King bow down before him and kiss his feet. This done, he went into a balcony which looked on a great market-place, whither he commanded all the dead children that lay up and down the street to be brought, and then causing them to be hacked very small, he gave them, mingled with bran, rice, and herbs, to his elephants to eat. Afterward, with a strange kind of ceremony, at the sound of trumpets, drums, and other such like instruments, there was above an hundred horses led in, laden with the quarters of men and women, which also he commanded to be cut small, and then cast into a great fire kindled expressly for it. These things so done, the Queen was brought before him, that was wife to the poor little King, who, as I said before, was but thirteen years of age and she thirty-and-six, a woman very white and well favoured. He made her to be publickly stript stark naked, and to be torn and mangled with whipping, and then in this manner to be led up and down all the city, where amidst the cries and hootings of the people, he exposed her to other cruel torments, wherewith she was tormented till she gave up the ghost. When she was dead he made her to be bound to the little King, her husband, who was yet living, and having commanded a great stone to be tyed about their necks, they were cast into the river, which was a kind of cruelty very dreadful to all that beheld it. To these barbarous parts he added many others so inhumane as it is not likely that any other but he could imagine the like. And for a conclusion of his cruelties, he caused all the gentlemen that were taken alive, being some three hundred, to be impaled, and so spitted like roasted pigs, to be also thrown into the river, whereby may be seen how great and unheard of the

injustice of this tyrant was, which he exercised on these miserable wretches."

These things were done in the good old times.

Two hundred years later Prome was in the path of Alompra's victorious progress, and though the great general Talaban defended the city, it was taken, and the cause of Pegu was lost before Prome. Among the spoils of war was a cannon thirty feet long, which had been brought from Arakan, and afterwards adorned the palace of Ava.

Nearly three centuries after Tabeng Shweti had enacted his revolting cruelties within the walls of Prome, the city was taken by a foreign foe. There was then no valiant queen to defend the stronghold. It was vacated by its defenders, who set fire to the city on their withdrawal, and the British forces entered to quench a burning city and take possession of a deserted fortress. In a very short time order was established, the natives returned, bazaars were opened, religious festivals were held, and conquered Prome did everything possible to welcome her conquerors and to show her trust in them.

The most interesting building in Prome is the ancient pagoda, the Shway San-daw. It resembles the Shway Dagohn, but is not so large nor so imposing. The solid, gilded pagoda is, with its shrines, statues, bells, and miniature pagodas, crowded on to the narrow summit of a hill. Colossal griffins guard the entrance to the steps. The most revered relic is a flag-stone six feet long, on which is impressed the image of a foot covered with inscriptions in Pali. This gigantic impression is said to be that of the foot of the Lord Buddha when he was on earth.

When the British troops withdrew from Prome after the conclusion of the treaty of Yandabo, the inhabitants loudly expressed their regrets and lamentations. In the war of 1854 Prome was again deserted by its garrison, and again taken possession of by the English, and has been held by them

ever since. And thus has been fulfilled an old prophecy to the effect that ships without sails would come up the Irrawaddy and bring peace and prosperity.

Pegu.

In the sixth century it is recorded that two sons of the King of Thahtun, called Wimala and Thamala, desiring to found a kingdom of their own, set out with a band of followers and founded the city of Pegu or Hansawadi. When Anoarahta, King of Pagahn, conquered and destroyed Thahtun, all the sacred books and chronicles were carried away and lost, hence we have no records of the early history of Pegu. It was long subject to Pagahn, and after endless contests for supremacy with Ava, it became in the sixteenth century, under the great King Bareng Naung, one of the most powerful and magnificent cities of the East, and the centre of a great export trade.

It is thus described by the traveller Ralph Fitch in its halcyon days:—"Pegu is a Citie very great, strong and very faire, with walls of stone, and great ditches round about it. There are two Townes, the old Towne and the new. In the old Towne are all the Merchant-strangers, and very many Merchants of the Countrie. All the goods are sold in the old Towne, which is very great and hath many suburbs round about it, and all the houses are made of Canes which they call Bambos, and be covered with straw. In your house you have a Warehouse which they call Godon, and which is made of brick, to put your goods in, for oftentimes they take fire and burne in an houre foure or five hundred houses, so that if the Godon were not, you should bee in danger to have all burned at a trice. In the new Towne is the King and all his Nobilitie and Gentrie. It is a citie very great and populous, and is made square and with very faire Walls,

and a great ditch about it full of water with many Crocodiles in it, it hath twenty Gates and they be made of stone, for every square five gates. There are also many Turrets for Centinels to watch, made of wood, and gilded with Gold very faire. The Streets are the fairest that ever I saw, as straight as a line from one Gate to the other, and so broad, that ten or twelve men may ride afront thorow them. On both sides of them at every man's doore is set a Palmer tree, which is the Nut-tree, which make a very faire shew and a very commodious shadow, so that a man may walk in the shade all day. The houses be made of wood and covered with tiles. The King's house is in the middle of the Citie, and is walled and ditched round about, and the buildings within are made of wood very sumptously gilded, and great workmanship is on the fore-front, which is likewise very costly gilded. And the house where his Pagode or Idol standeth is covered with tiles of silver, and all the walls are gilded with gold. . . . Neare unto the Palace of the King there is a Treasure wonder full rich, the which because it is so neare, hee doth not account of it, and it standeth open for all men to see in a great walled Court with two Gates. There are foure Houses gilded very richly and covered with Lead, in every one of them are Pagodes or Images of huge stature and great value. In the first is the Picture of a King in Gold with a Crowne of gold on his head, full of great Rubies and Saphires, and about him there stand foure Children of Gold. In the second house is the Picture of a Man in Silver wonderfull great, high as a house, his Foote is as long as a man, and he is made sitting, with a crowne on his head very rich with Stones. In the third house is the Picture of a Man greater than the other made of Brasse, with a rich Crowne on his head. In the fourth and last house doth stand another made of Brasse, greater than the other, with a Crowne also on his head very rich with Stones. In another Court not very farre from

this stand foure other Pagodes or Idols, marvellous great of Copper, made in the same place where they doe stand, for they bee so great; that they bee not to bee removed, they stand in foure houses very faire, and are them selves gilded all over save their heads, and they shew like a blacke Morian. Their expenses in gilding these Images are wonder full."

The great state of the monarch is described and the humble obeisances made him by his noblemen and by those who would speak with him. As to his power to make war our author says, "When hee goeth to warre, hee goeth very strong. Army being there hee went to Odia (Ayuthia), in the countrie of Siam, with three hundred thousand men and five thousand Elephants. Thirty thousand men were his Guard. . . . When the King rideth abroad, hee rideth with a great Guard and many Noblemen, often times upon a Elephant with a fine Castle upon him very fairly gilded with gold, and set with many Rubies and Saphires, in his, and sometimes upon a great frame like a Horse-liter, which hath a little house upon it covered over head, but open on the sides, and which is all gilded with gold, and set with many Rubies and Saphires, whereof hee hath an infinite store in his Countrie, and is carried upon sixteen or eighteen men's shoulders. Very great feasting and triumphing is many times before the King both men and women."

But after the death of the great Bareng Naung, Pegu fell on evil days. His son exhausted the country by wars with Siam, and hundreds of thousands of men fell victims to the sword, to famine, and the fatigues of war. The "faire streets of Pegu" were witness to a terrible act of cruelty. The King believing that his nobles were intending to revolt against him, gave orders that they, their wives and children, should be burnt alive. A great and spacious scaffold was erected in Pegu, and the grandees were brought on to it, and their wives and children, and the women great with child, and

the infants in swaddling-clothes, were all brought together to the number of 4000. The terrible King wrote an order in letters of gold, commanding that the scaffold should be set on fire, which was done. All the inhabitants were forced to come and assist, and "there was heard nothing but weepings, shriekings, cryings, and sobbings;" and "I also went hither," says Gasparo Balbi, "and saw it with compassion and grief, that little children without any fault should suffer such martyrdom."

The tributary kings rebelled against this cruel tyrant. Pegu was besieged and taken, and Bareng Naung's city of golden palaces was made a heap of ruins. The river-banks, which travellers had described as covered with prosperous villages and cultivated gardens, were desolate, and became overgrown with jungle and the haunt of wild beasts. The wretched remnants of the population in the ruined city, unable to get food, were reduced to the lowest straits of famine. "The miserable Peguans," says Nicolas Pimenta, "were brought to such miserie and want, that they did eat man's flesh and kept public shambles thereof. Parents abstained not from their children, and children devoured their parents, the stronger by force preyed on the weaker." Thus Pegu knew the extremities of prosperity and poverty, of splendid pomp and demoralising wretchedness. Under the rule of that strange adventurer, the Portuguese merchant-king, De Brito, Pegu was to some extent rebuilt, but only to see the tyrant impaled alive before the palace he had erected. More than a century later Pegu was peaceful and prosperous under the mild and just rule of the Gwe Shan king, and was once more the capital of a great empire, when Alompra sprang into power and usurped the throne of Burma. To possess Pegu was his great desire. The city was besieged and closely invested. The Peguans fought with the courage of despair, but famine reduced them to the greatest weakness. The monks, headed by their superior, issued from the city, and tried to soften the heart of the conqueror

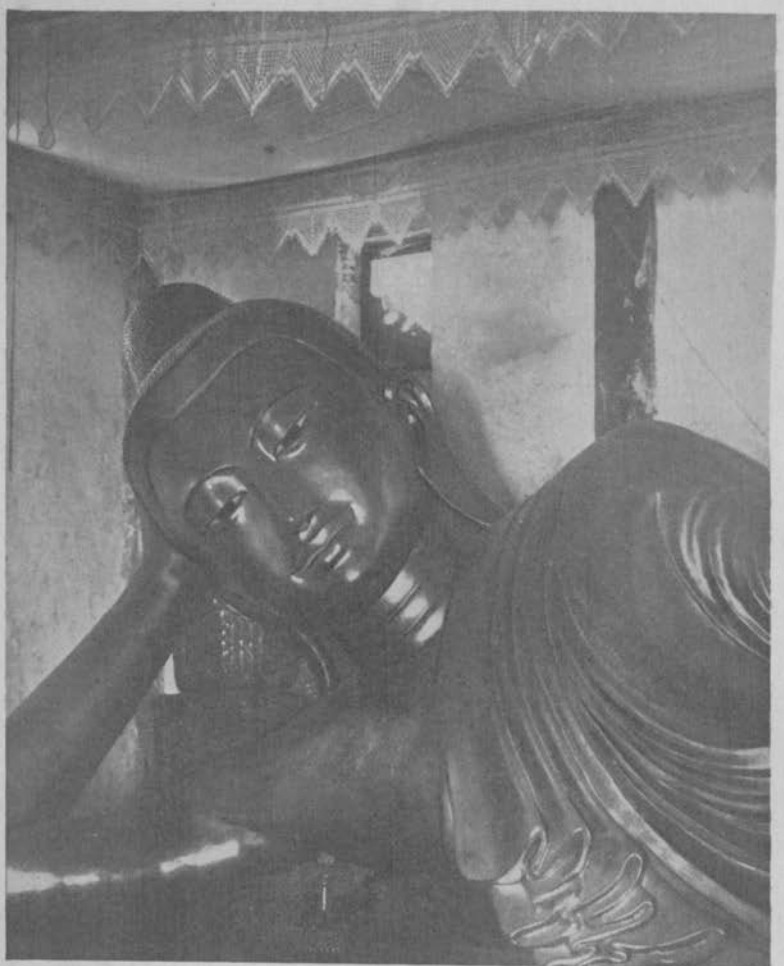
by prayers for clemency, but in vain. The King's maiden daughter Maikum, who was betrothed to the general Talaban, was then presented to him as a peace-offering, but the devoted city was only the more closely invested. Famine was rampant, the wretchedness intense; in a night attack a breach was made in the walls, and ill-fated Pegu was given up to plunder, its fine buildings were destroyed, and thousands of its inhabitants were put to death or sold as slaves.

Pegu never again became a great city, but towards the end of the last century the King of Burma, anxious to conciliate the Talaings, gave orders to rebuild it, and made grants of land to settlers. Gradually around the Shway Ma-doo, the great gilded pagoda, and within the limits of the old walls, a new Pegu arose, built somewhat on the old plan.

The Shway Ma-doo is one of the most ancient pagodas of Pegu. It is a perfectly solid building, octagonal in shape at the base and circular at the summit. Each side of its immense base measures 162 feet, and covers a superficies of 1391 square feet. The first terrace is but ten feet high, and from the platform of this rises another, 20 feet high, and measuring 684 square feet. From this second platform rises the fluted, gilded cupola, terminating in a circular spire crowned by a golden htee. The height is 361 feet from the ground and 331 feet from the second terrace. The terraces are reached by flights of steps. Each platform is crowded with replicas of the pagoda, about 25 feet high, and at each angle of the upper terrace there is a pagoda 67 feet high, resembling the great temple. Some large figures adorn the platforms, as also large bronze bells; streamers on which prayers are written float in the wind from tall poles, surmounted by the Brahminy goose, and a number of kioungs and rest-houses for pilgrims are built within the sacred precincts.

The Peguans claim great antiquity for their pagoda, and tell how that 2300 years ago two brothers came to Pegu from

beyond Martaban to trade, and wishing to perform an act



COLOSSAL DYING BUDDHA.

of piety, they built a pagoda one cubit high. In the night

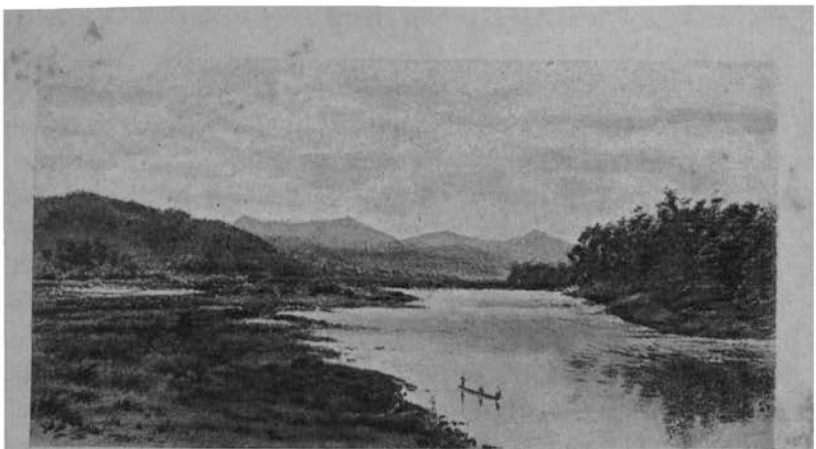
Siganne, the spirit of thunder and lightning, added two cubits to the holy building; the brothers then built another cubit, and in the night it was again miraculously doubled. When the pagoda was twelve cubits high the brothers ceased to build; but successive kings have continued the work, and added to the pagoda till it now attains the height of 361 feet. The platform of the Shway Ma-doo was the scene of one of the most determined attacks made by the Burmans in the first Burmese war in 1823, but the English garrison was relieved and Pegu fell.

Not many years ago a sacred relic of great sanctity came to light. A mound covered with jungle was cleared, when the railway was being constructed, by a contractor in a search for laterite, and, much to the surprise of everybody, the mound was found to consist of an immense recumbent statue of Buddha. It is built of brick, and measures 180 feet long and is 46 feet high at the shoulder. All records of this gigantic statue are lost, but it is now regarded with great veneration, and has been encased in white plaster as a work of merit by the pious. Pegu was always celebrated for its colossal statues, and in the Kyaikpun pagoda there are four immense statues of Buddha 90 feet high, seated back to back. A large number of inscribed stones in both the Pali and the Talaing languages have been found and read by the Government archæologist.

MAULMAIN.

It is admitted beyond dispute that Maulmain is the most beautifully placed city in Burma. Its position is unique. It is situated on the left bank of the Salwen, where this river receives the waters of the Gyaing and Attaran. Through the town runs a range of richly wooded hills, crowned with many white and gilded pagodas, and in the shady glades are carved monasteries, where shaven monks lead peaceful lives.

The European and Burmese towns are mixed together, and extend for about eight miles over the hillsides and along the banks of the river. Here are located busy mills for husking rice, shipbuilding docks, and timber yards where immense elephants are employed, as in Rangoon, in stacking the great logs of teak which are floated down-stream from the vast forests of Pegu. Far up the river the trees are felled in the forests and drawn by elephants to the edge of the streams,



ON THE SALWEN.

A Charcoal Drawing by the Author, from a Photograph.

swollen by the south-west monsoon. They are then stripped of their bark, branded all over with the owner's name, and pitched into the river, which it is trusted will carry them safely two or three hundred miles to the Government timber depot at Maulmain, where they are identified and claimed by the agent of the lessee of the teak forest. A great many of the logs are stranded by the swollen waters on high ledges and cliffs of the river, to lie there until floated by the next flood. Numbers of natives go out in canoes to look for drifting logs, which

they lash with ropes and bring into the depot at Maulmain, and receive a reward for so doing.

The valuable teak forests are beginning to be worked out, and consequently the teak trade is not as large and prosperous as it formerly was. In 1892–93 it was valued at Rs.33,000,000. Maulmain, though not so large as Rangoon, can still boast of 56,000 inhabitants.

The views from the wooded hills in the centre of the town are most beautiful and extensive. The eye ranges over level paddy-fields to the weird jagged limestone peaks which contain the famed "Farm Caves," and beyond to the blue Dawna hills. Limestone cliffs and forest-clad mountains bound the view on either side, and the plains are streaked by the silver rivers. Beyond the town the eye rests on broad waters, in which are mirrored green islands and the white and golden pagodas of the rocky Gaungsekwin. Few cities can boast of such scenery in their midst.

The pagodas of Maulmain are numerous. One of them, the Kyaikthanlan, is celebrated for containing a bell with a pigeon-English inscription, which runs thus:—"This bell is made by Koonalingala the priest, and weight 600 viss. No one body design to destroy this Bell. Moulmien March 30, 1855. He who destroyed to this Bell, they must be in the great Heell, and unable to coming out." At another pagoda named the Uzina the Burmese show their ability in carving life-size and life-like figures. The three objects which so moved Gautauma and confirmed his belief in the vanity of human wishes, so that he decided to quit his royal palace and become a hermit, were an old man decrepit with the infirmities of age, a man suffering from a loathsome disease, and a corpse undergoing decomposition. These and other figures are executed with much native talent and skill at the Uzina.

The great limestone cliffs, which are within a day's excursion from Maulmain, abound in immense caves. Most of them are situ-

ated on the banks of the different rivers, and are reached by steam launches. The "Farm Caves" (described by Major Temple in the *Indian Antiquary*, Dec. 1893) are found in the cliffs which are seen from the heights of Maulmain to start abruptly from the plain. There are here vast halls, so extensive that they can be only dimly lit by a Bengal light. High up on the walls, platforms and shelves have been erected to carry images of Buddha. At one time the whole place was probably crowded with figures of all sizes, as are still some of the caves farther from Maulmain. The large reclining and sitting figures of Gautauma remain, but numbers of the smaller figures have been carried away as relics. The stalactites, and even the roof, bear signs of having been covered with carvings and paintings.

If a country is happy which has no history, the same is specially true of a city in Burma. Maulmain has no history; its streets have not been witnesses of royal pageants nor of royal massacres. It has never been besieged like unfortunate Martaban on the opposite bank of the Salwen. Founded as a city by the British Government in the year 1826, as the capital of the then recently acquired province of Tenasserim, it has prospered as a commercial port under British rule. Here, nevertheless, the Buddhists hold some of their most brilliant festivals, and they have built carved kioungs and gilded pagodas within sound of the whistle of the steamers on the rivers and the ceaseless burr of the rice-mills.

CHAPTER VIII

THE GREAT FORESTS AND THEIR WONDERS

NO one can travel by rail from Rangoon to Mandalay without being struck by the beauty of the jungle through which much of the line passes, and without being interested in the variety of the foliage and the blossoms of the trees and creepers. The broad masses of splendid colour on the banks of the Irrawaddy produced by blossoming forest trees cannot likewise fail to impress even the most careless observer of nature. Often indeed in sketching these have I been reminded of the stretches of purple heather seen in Scotland in the autumn. The great variety of the vegetation of Burma and the exceeding beauty of the flowering trees are the source of delight and wonder, both to the casual tourist and to those who have lived long in the land, and who have by their writings aimed at giving some idea of the lavish gifts of nature to this favoured country.

The queen of blossoming trees is the *Amherstia nobilis*. Dr. Wallich, who first described and named it, says, "There can be no doubt that this tree, when in foliage and blossom, is the most strikingly superb object which can possibly be imagined. It is unequalled in the flora of the East, and I presume not surpassed in magnificence and elegance in any part of the world. The flowers are of a brilliant scarlet of the shape of a pea-blossom, and hang from the pendulous arched branches of the tree in tassels more than a yard long."

"The champac's leaves of gold," sung by the poet Moore, are the favourite blossoms with which the Burmese maiden

"scatters many a bud upon her long black hair." The botanical name of the tree is the *Michelia Champaca*. Its golden flowers have a fragrant and aromatic odour. Groves of Gungau or Mesua trees produce, when changing their leaves, a quite remarkable effect, particularly if seen from a distance. While the trees are still bearing bright green foliage, and are laden with the sweet-smelling flowers, the fresh young leaves come forth of a brilliant crimson colour. The Hindus have honoured this tree by placing its odoriferous blooms in the quiver of their Cupid, Camadeva, and Moore has thus sung its beauties in "Lalla Rookh"—

> "And these sweet flowers that unfold
> Their buds in Camadeva's quiver."

The Burmese give it potential grace by averring that under its fragrant shade Aramaitriya, the last of the Buddhas yet to come, will attain divinity.

Burma is rich in palms, but the most common are the cocoa-nut (*Cocos*), the areca (*Areca catechu*), and the palmyra (*Borassus flabelliformis*). What Burma would do without palm trees it is difficult to imagine. The cocoa-nut furnishes timber, ropes, and cups for daily use, a refreshing food, and, when tapped, a juice "which after fermentation becomes a generous wine." The areca gives the nut which, mixed with lime and the leaf of the betel pepper, is chewed by all Burmans. It is this objectionable habit which gives the ugly red stain to the lips and saliva and the discoloration of the teeth that mar the beauty of even the prettiest Burman girl. The palm tree yields food to eat, thatch for houses, leaves for books and Bibles, fans for phongyees, and a sweet wine for those who love strong drinks. The pith of the trunk of a variety of palm called the *Corypha Umbraculifera* affords a flour from which a kind of bread is made. This is a grand tree, often a hundred feet high. Once in its lifetime it flowers. From the centre

of the apex of the stem an immense panicle of bloom, twenty feet or more in height, is developed. The corypha does not, however, perform the crowning act of its life in secret, for the silence of the solitudes of the forest is disturbed by the report of a loud explosion when the crowded spathe bursts. After this supreme effort the tree dies.

The banana or plantain tree grows freely, and furnishes its wholesome fruit all the year round. Peepul and banyan trees cast their broad shadows in the forests, where tamarind, sassafras, ebony, tobacco, lac, cinnamon, mango, and indigo trees grow in profusion. The open under-space is filled by the golden-green plumes of the feathery bamboo, and the branches above are bound by creepers into an impenetrable tangle. Some of these are of gigantic size, with grand flowers, producing Brobdingnagian pods, which in the case of the *Entada Pursætha* measure no less than five feet in length. The great leaves of the *Pothos gigantea* measure two feet long and half a foot broad. From the branches of the forest trees hang festoons of delicate and brilliantly coloured orchids, and the barks are feathered with ferns. The rattan grows everywhere: the strong canes furnish ropes with which to drag timber, and the finer ones are used for basket-work.

The pride, however, of the forests of Burma is the teak tree. There are said to be twenty varieties of teak, but the most abundant is the *Tectona grandis*. It comes to maturity in about eighty years, and attains a girth of twelve to sixteen feet, with a bole of eighty to ninety feet to the top of the branches. Splendid baulks of timber sixty feet in length, and as much as twenty-four inches square, are frequently shipped from Maulmain. The wood is of a light brown colour, and amongst its valuable properties it contains a resinous oil which preserves iron from rust and resists the action of water as well as of insects. It is quickly seasoned and easily worked, and from its combined strength, elasticity, and endurance is considered

to be the most valuable timber for shipbuilding in the world.[1] The tree comes to perfection on the southern and western slopes of the hill forests, where it is exposed to the rays of a powerful sun. It does not grow on northern slopes. The trees are not found in large numbers together in the same area, the proportion being generally one teak to every five hundred, or, in the so-called teak forests, one to three hundred other forest trees. The teak is of rather rapid growth, and in eight years it reaches a height of twenty-five feet or more. The leaves are very large, and have been compared by Oriental writers to elephants' ears. They are from ten to twenty inches in length, and from eight to sixteen in breadth. The tree is deciduous, and seeds at the end of the rainy season. The seeds are contained in a hard shell, and, owing to the lateness of the season when they are produced, they lie dormant for a considerable time.

The teak forests are strictly preserved by the Government; no tree can be felled, even by those who have purchased the right, till it has been girdled by the Government forest officers. The rivers down which logs are floated must be kept free from all obstructions; no hill gardens are allowed to be made in the reserved districts, and cutting, marking, or felling of any trees or shrubs of any kind without express permission is penal; even roads and bridle-paths may be closed if it is thought that giving access to the forests endangers the valuable teak trees. All these elaborate precautions are taken to prevent the calamity of forest fires, which are easily kindled by the nomadic tribes of the mountains, who wastefully burn down the jungle to effect a clearance previous to the primitive sowing of their crops. In the days of Burmese rule, the forest lands were free to anybody who chose to make a clearance, and the strict laws now enforced over the extensive tracts of forest

[1] Fytche's "Burma."

reserved by the British Government are felt as a great hardship.

There are many other fine timber trees in the forests of Burma, among which may be mentioned the *Dipterocarpus lævis* and the *D. turbinatus*, which are, however, more valuable for the wood-oil which they produce than for their wood. The oil is extracted by making a triangular excavation in the bole of the tree, in which a fire is lit; this causes the oil to flow freely into an earthen vessel, suspended to collect it. A single tree is said to produce as much as from thirty to forty gallons in a season without injury to its vitality. The uses to which this wood-oil are put are described in the chapter on Native Arts and Industries.[1] The tree is of magnificent proportions, springing to a height of 180 feet, with a girth of sixteen feet, the trunk being often buttressed with mighty offshoots extending over an area of fifty feet.

Though the greatest part of Burma is within the tropics, it is a subject of constant surprise to travellers to find the fruits of temperate climes growing wild in the forests, not in the high altitudes, but on the coast. Wild cherries and pears have been found, and are stated to be of good flavour. The bramble grows wild in Burma, the English brake fern (*Pteris aquilina*) is common on the hills, and the silver fern of Kamchatka has been met with. There is an abundance of tropical fruits; the pineapple is as plentiful as are apples in England, and oranges, lemons, pomegranates, guavas, and mangoes supply the vegetarian Burman with fresh fruit all the year round; while wild peppers, cayennes, chillies, and leaves of the forest trees, provide him with the hot curries in which he delights. But the fruit which is execrated as warmly by some as it is delighted in by others is the dorian, celebrated of old as it is at the present time for its evil smell and its exquisite flavour. The explorer Linschoten's description of it, four hundred years

[1] Chap. xx. p. 202.

ago, is identical with that given of it by every traveller since; for he says, "In taste and goodness it excelleth all kinds of fruit, and yet when it is first opened it smelleth like rotten onions, but in the taste, the sweetnesse and daintinesse thereof is tryed." If one can become reconciled to the odour of rotten onions, the dorian is acknowledged to be "beyond question the finest fruit in the world." In appearance it is like a large melon covered with spikes, so that it resembles a hedgehog.

Great as are the wonders of vegetation in the forests of Burma, the animal life with which they abound is still more astonishing, for here the wild elephant of colossal size roams at will, the man-eating tiger makes its lair, the monstrous rhinoceros wallows in lonely pools in the cool of the evening, and herds of buffaloes and deer find illimitable grazing-grounds. Here monkeys in countless crowds chatter among the trees, gorgeous parrots scream, gentle turtle-doves coo, the solitary tucktoo calls, and the hungry vulture watches for its prey. Here the deadly cobra lies in wait for its victim, and the hamadryad rears its head to strike and kill, the chameleon changes the colour of its coat unobserved, and the deadly pangu spider strikes the serpent with its poison fang, and outvenoming the most venomous in hate, sucks the brains of its victim. Every spot is filled with beautiful, terrible life, and it is not surprising that to the imaginative Burman the forest glades are peopled with demons and fairies, and that even the double-headed serpent is to him an object which he believes he has seen with his own eyes.[1]

The elephants which abound in the forests of Tenasserim, Pegu, and Bassein are said to be larger than they are in any part of Asia. They are held in so much veneration, that if a baby elephant is captured and brought in, it is considered honourable and an act of "merit" for the women to suckle it

[1] King Mindohn promised Colonel Phayre to send him the bones of beloos (ogres) from the forests.

from their breasts. Elephants congregate in herds, of which the largest and strongest tusker is generally the lord, but not always so, for sometimes the position of leader is taken by a strong-minded and cunning female elephant. The herd is always devoted to its leader, who is implicitly obeyed and followed. If a young male elephant becomes too obstreperous, he is driven out of his own herd, in which case he either fights the lord of another for the leadership or else becomes an outcast. Such a bachelor elephant is always called a "rogue," and is a most vicious and destructive creature. General Fytche tells an entertaining story of a "rogue" elephant of immense size with which he did single combat in the Bassein district. For more than two hundred years this "rogue" had been a terror to the people far and wide; native huntsmen had failed to shoot him, and he was believed to be under the special protection of the Nats. Indeed, once when a native huntsman had shot at him with a magic silver bullet, specially cast by a "medicine man," the gun had burst in his hands, which was proof positive of the protection afforded to the wicked elephant by the demons of the forest. General Fytche determined to rid the neighbourhood of the "rogue," which had killed many men in his time. He tracked him to a dense forest, where he saw him rubbing his back against the bole of a gigantic tree, and fanning himself with some branches which he held in his trunk. Fytche fired, the elephant fell on his knees, but he was only stunned, and getting up, made straight for his enemy. The General dodged his quarry behind the trunks of trees for some time, but finally took up his position at the foot of a large tree, and awaited the charge of the immense beast. When the elephant was within twelve paces he fired, and the "rogue" sank dead at his feet. This elephant was 11 feet high, with a girth of 15 feet, and with tusks measuring 7 feet long.

Fytche, from his observations on Burmese elephants, is

A DEAD TIGER.

inclined to agree with Major Leveson that they have a limited but well-defined language. A shrill whistling produced by blowing through the trunk denotes satisfaction; alarm or surprise is expressed by a sound like "pr-rut pr-rut" made with the mouth; if angry, a trumpeting noise is produced, which becomes a hoarse roar or a terrific scream when charging an assailant, and if dissatisfied or in distress, as when tired, hungry, separated from the herd, or overloaded, the elephant repeatedly makes a sound like "urmph, urmph."

The man-eating tiger is common in the forests of Burma, and is the terror of the inhabitants of the jungle villages, so that tiger-shooting on foot, a sport of real danger, can be enjoyed by those who like the excitement of risking their lives in this particular way. The tiger is often accompanied in his nocturnal expeditions by the wolf-like jungle dog (*Canis rutilans*), with which it shares its prey.

Ponderous rhinoceroses wander through the glades; in the daytime they seek high ground, and at night they descend where there is a pool in which they may wallow. The rhinoceros of Asia differs from that of Africa by the presence of well-defined incisors, by means of which the bark is stripped off trees and plants uprooted for food. The one-horned species or *Rhinoceros unicornis*, the unicorn of Scripture, is also found in Burma. Its horn was highly valued as a sovereign remedy against poison, and merchants used in the olden days to come to Pegu to barter with the King for this commodity, "whereof the King onely hath the traffique in his hands."

Herds of buffaloes wander at will; the male leader is a fierce and courageous fighter; not only will he charge a man, but it is said that a herd will surround and kill a tiger. In the open spaces of the forest immense herds of deer may be encountered, particularly the large-horned *Cervus frontalis*, peculiar to Burma and Manipur. The natives kill deer, not by shooting or chasing them in the ordinary way, but a party

of ten or twelve men go into the woods at night in a buffalo cart; in front two or three lighted torches are carried, and two persons walk beside the cart bearing great wooden bells which are constantly beaten. The deer seem dazzled by the light and dazed by the noise, so that they remain motionless, and are then easily killed with swords, spears, and knives. Wild boar and porcupines are common in the woods, but the lion, the king of beasts, is not a native of Burma. The bear is found in the mountains of Martaban; the orang-outang is said to be met with in the forests of Pegu.

Apes are very numerous, and I have seen them gambolling in crowds on the banks of the Irrawaddy. Sangermano describes how "they leap from tree to tree with such agility as to seem birds rather than quadrupeds; they fight with each other and mock the lookers-on, and chase the fish and crabs that have been thrown on dry ground in the most ludicrous manner."

But perhaps the Burmese forests are more remarkable for their wondrous snakes, vipers, and venomous creatures than for other specimens of natural history. The stories told of the hamadryad (*Naja Elaps*) are numerous. This deadly snake is from twelve to fifteen feet long, and if attacked, or if its nest is interfered with, it will pursue a human being with great rapidity of movement and persistency of intention. When it raises its head, it is taller than a man, and it is said to strike at once at the head of its victim. When I was in Burma, I was told that a well-known London dealer in rare and costly animals, had offered a prize of £1000 for a live full-grown hamadryad. The offer was a safe one to make. At one time the Government gave a reward for every hamadryad killed. The result was that the nests were carefully searched for, and when found were watched by natives. As soon as the eggs were hatched a circle of fire was made round the nest, the mother was caught and killed or allowed to escape, and

the young snakes were then slaughtered and the reward of the Government claimed for each of them. It was soon discovered that the offered reward led to the breeding of hamadryads instead of to their extermination.

An old story is told of a hamadryad which established itself near a village and became the terror of the inhabitants. A reward was offered to anybody who would kill it, but no one cared to make the attempt. At last an old woman declared herself ready to undertake the daring deed. She placed a pitcher of melted pitch on her head and started alone to meet the hamadryad. It raised its body and struck as usual at the top of the head of its intended victim, but unawares it plunged its head into the melted pitch, where it stuck fast and was suffocated. Mr. Theobald tells, however, that he has seized with his own hands one of these large and deadly snakes on two occasions.

The cobra capello is very common in the forests, but it is outdone in venom by the cobra ceras, the deaf viper, which no noise can rouse, but which, "if confined so that it cannot fasten on its captor, will in its rage bury its long fangs deep in its own body."

The python makes its huge meal undisturbed in the forests, and all travellers tell stories of its power to swallow whole deer, and even great boars. It is said to strip off the skin and flesh from the head of its prey, cover the whole body with a glutinous saliva, and swallow the animal entire, head foremost. It kills by constricting the animal in the coils of its immensely strong body before swallowing it. Notwithstanding its dangerous tendencies, the python is believed to be the embodiment of a Nat. The Burmans have a tradition that the boa was in the far-away past the most venomous of snakes, but that on being once teased by an impertinent crow, he became so angry that he spat up all his poison. Other snakes ate the poison, and thus became venomous, but the python was henceforth harm-

less. In Tavoy the huge reptile is made a domestic pet, and is kept amiable by being fed on rice and eggs. He becomes, in fact, an inmate of the household, "so that the cat, the dog, and the baby may be seen curled up together in a corner with the boa, making one another mutually cosy."[1] The strange favourite has, however, its uses, and the Tavoy fishermen look upon the python as the most weather-wise of beings. He is always carried with them when they go fishing, and remains coiled in the bows so long as the weather is fair; but if a storm is coming on, the python quietly drops into the sea and makes for land, and the fishermen look upon this as a signal that they also had better make for port. Tigers are fond of making a meal of a python, and Fytche describes how he shot a tiger which was in the act of devouring one.

A spider called by the Burmans the *pangu* is believed to be more venomous than any viper. It is described as being about three inches broad, its belly is covered with red hairs, and it has ten legs furnished with hooked claws. In its mouth are two black hooked fangs, and its back is covered with a hard scaly case like a tortoise. It is incessantly hunting for serpents, and when it finds one, it is stated to nimbly climb up its back, strike its black fangs into the creature's head, and suck out its brains (Sangermano).

Scorpions are numerous, and are said to grow to an immense size. Centipedes get under the clothes, and their bite causes a torturing inflammation. The wild Karens tell of a centipede in the forests of Pegu grown as large as an ox, and which clatters its hundred legs with a noise that may be heard from afar; and the Chins romance of winged beasts in the mountains of Arakan, which fly through the air with a rush and roar terrifying to the beholder! We wait for men of science to investigate all these wonders, and to tell us what the forests of Pegu and Burma really contain.

[1] Shway Yoe's "Burman."

Birds of every kind, peacocks, pigeons, turtle-doves, falcons, eagles, and vultures are abundant; the parrots are so numerous that they are the scourge of the farmer, and from the boughs of almost every tree hangs the cleverly-woven nest of the weaver-bird. Edible birds' nests are also found in large quantities, and are collected and sent to China, where they are greatly appreciated. On the Irrawaddy, flocks of wild ducks and geese are seen, the graceful paddy-bird stands pensively on the sandbanks, while cormorants and big fisher-birds are busily looking for prey.

Butterflies, ants, gnats, and horseflies swarm during the rainy season, and mosquitoes are so tormenting and so large that it has been humorously stated that they have been shot at in mistake for snipe! This hallucination was probably the result of many "pegs," doubtless taken to soothe a body and mind irritated beyond endurance.

The tuctoo, or trout-spotted lizard, is thought to bring good luck to a house, and no Burman would think of disturbing one which had taken up its abode in the verandah, where it feeds on moths and insects. It is about eight or nine inches long, of a pale brown colour spotted with pink, and has a flat head with goggle eyes. It utters a loud and long-drawn cry—"tuc-too, tuc-too-o-o." I shall not easily forget the first time I heard the tuc-too call. I was one evening exploring some ruined pagodas near a tumble-down kioung in the outskirts of a jungle village on the Irrawaddy, when the silence was suddenly disturbed by a loud strange cry—"tuctoo, tuctoo-o-o," and which seemed quite near. "What's that?" I cried, almost in alarm, to my companion. "Why, that's a lizard, the tuctoo," he replied. "Tuctoo, tuctoo-o-o," echoed the lizard from the balcony of the lonely kioung, to which it did not seem to have brought good luck.

The chameleon is a native of Burma, as well as a great many lizards, some of which are said to be excellent to eat, their flesh being as delicate as fowl.

In the delta, crocodiles are very numerous in the estuaries of the Irrawaddy and Salwen rivers, where the water is brackish. They often become most formidable as animals of prey, and a single alligator will, after having made several victims, become so emboldened that he will usurp dominion over a certain portion of a river, where he is the terror of every boat's crew that passes. In a Burmese dug-out the steersman sits very low, often only a few inches above the water's edge. The crocodile's mode of attack is to glide up silently to the bow or stern of the boat, and then with one stroke of his powerful barbed tail close to the top of the low boat, he sweeps into the water whoever may be within reach, when he is seized and devoured.[1] Burmans wear nodules of iron pyrites as a charm against crocodiles, but they do not prevent the monster from swallowing man and charm together. Dr. Price, the American missionary, was present when one of his crew was seized by an alligator on the Irrawaddy.[2] The man had gone overboard to do something to the boat, when he was seized by a crocodile of extraordinary size, and quietly dragged under water in sight of his helpless and horrified companions. Presently the monster reappeared close to the boat's side, holding the still living man by the waist in his terrible jaws, just as a dog holds a stick. Rising with his prey several feet out of the water, he brought it down with great force and a loud crack on the surface, with the object probably of breaking up the body; the red stain on the placid water giving a silent sign that the murderous intention had been carried out.

It is pleasant to turn to the consideration of the kinder relations often established between man and the denizens of the rivers. At a holy island on the Irrawaddy above Tsengoo, a colony of large fish live a tranquil life in a pool under the shadow of a phongyee-kioung, and are fed

[1] Mason's "Natural Productions of Burmah."

[2] "The Prisoner in Burmah," by Gouger.

by the solitary monks. On the boatmen calling "tet-tet," a number of large fish, three or four feet long, crowd round the boat's edge to be fed with pellets of rice, and seem to be delighted to have their backs stroked. These fish are considered sacred, and to do them royal honour, they are sometimes caught by the people on festival days, and brought into the boat to have gold leaf attached to their backs, and are then returned to the river.

I must conclude this short account of some of the natural wonders of Burma by telling of the floating islands on Lake Nyoung-ywe, beyond the Taungu country. The surface of the water is covered by a great number of floating islands. They are produced by the interlacing roots of a coarse grass or reed, which in dry weather shoot downwards to the bottom of the lake. When the floods come, they are separated from the soil, are floated up and become free. The inhabitants on the borders of the lake build fishing cottages on these islands, which they anchor to the bottom by long bamboos. They undulate in an alarming manner with every step, and in a squall a man's house may face every point of the compass.

Burma, with its marvellous forests, rivers, and mountains, would prove such a mine of fruitful research to the naturalist and man of science, that it is most earnestly to be hoped that the Government will, at no distant date, send fully qualified men to investigate the flora, fauna, geology, and the natural history of this wonderful land, so that we may have accurate knowledge within our reach, and not depend, as now, on the observations of missionaries, military men, and travellers for our scientific knowledge of the country. It is a subject of constant regret by those who have told us all we know of Burma, that investigations of a truly scientific character have not yet been made, and it is averred that if the land had been conquered by the French, an army of archæologists, botanists, geologists, zoologists, &c., would have followed the

army of occupation, and that the temples would have been described and pictured, the natural products examined, and the plants and animals classified, in a number of admirable monographs long ere this. We trust that, as the revenue of Burma now shows a liberal increase over expenditure, the Government may see its way to expend some of its funds in grants for scientific research on the fauna, flora, and geology of the country.

BOOK II

THE PEOPLE OF BURMA AND THEIR CUSTOMS

BURMESE BAMBOO HOUSES.

CHAPTER IX

THE BURMAN AT HOME

A BURMESE house can, it is said, be built without a nail; but though so exceedingly simple in construction, it is admirably suited to a warm climate, where the needs of the people are few, and where the plains are every year flooded by the overflowing of the rivers, and are occasionally rocked by earthquake shocks.

All dwelling-houses in Burma, from the King's palace to the meanest peasant's hut, are one-storied, owing to the universal feeling that it is an indignity to have anybody's feet over one's head. In the days of Burmese rule, the building of domestic houses was strictly regulated by law: brick buildings were not allowed, lest they might be converted into fortresses; gilding was forbidden, as being fit only for the

palaces of kings and the kioungs (monasteries) of phongyees (monks), and archways over the doorways were not permitted. The size, and even the building materials of the houses of every class, were the subject of legal enactment, disobedience to which incurred the penalty of death. Though these laws are no longer in force, habit induces the Burmans to build in the same way as they have done for centuries.

The houses are always raised on posts seven or eight feet from the ground, these posts being of teak, or of less costly wood, or of bamboo. Planking for the floor is then tied with rattan to the uprights, or, in the case of very poor people, undressed bamboo poles are used. The walls are made of split bamboo beautifully plaited into fanciful patterns, and the roof is composed of the leaves of the toddy-palm, which have been soaked in salt water to make them insect-proof. This thatch is no longer allowed for roofing new houses in towns, as it is very inflammable; tiles or shingles are now used. In all towns where thatched houses are still numerous, and, in fact, as an adjunct to every thatched house, there will be seen leaning against the wall and ready for use a long hooked bamboo stick, with which to pull off the roof directly it ignites, and also a wooden flapper with which to beat out any spark that may settle on the thatch. Chatties or pitchers full of water are also kept on the roof. These precautions are very necessary, as a fire once started spreads rapidly, and a whole town or village may be burnt down in an incredibly short space of time. The old water-clock towers are now used as watch-towers, from which a signal is given when a fire breaks out.

The Burmese house generally consists of one good-sized apartment, but one or more rooms may lead off from the common room, whence they are separated by partitions of woven matting. The floor of these inner rooms is generally raised one or two feet above the principal room. On the front of the house there is always a broad verandah, furnished with a balustrade, and

A RIVERSIDE VILLAGE.

built on a slightly lower level. Large flaps cut in the matting walls take the place of doors and windows; in the daytime the latter are raised, so that the passers-by can look in and see all that goes on; at night they are closed. The cottages of the Manipurians are not built on piles, and the Chinese settlers have always been distinguished by their brick houses. I have been into numbers of the homes of the poor in Upper Burma, and though life is extremely simple, it did not strike me as barbarous, and the housing of the people was, except at Mandalay, better than it often is in Ireland and in Italy. The well-to-do Burmans in towns in Lower Burma often live much as the Europeans do, and I have called on a Burmese lady in Rangoon who spoke English fluently and had all the surroundings of an English woman of position.

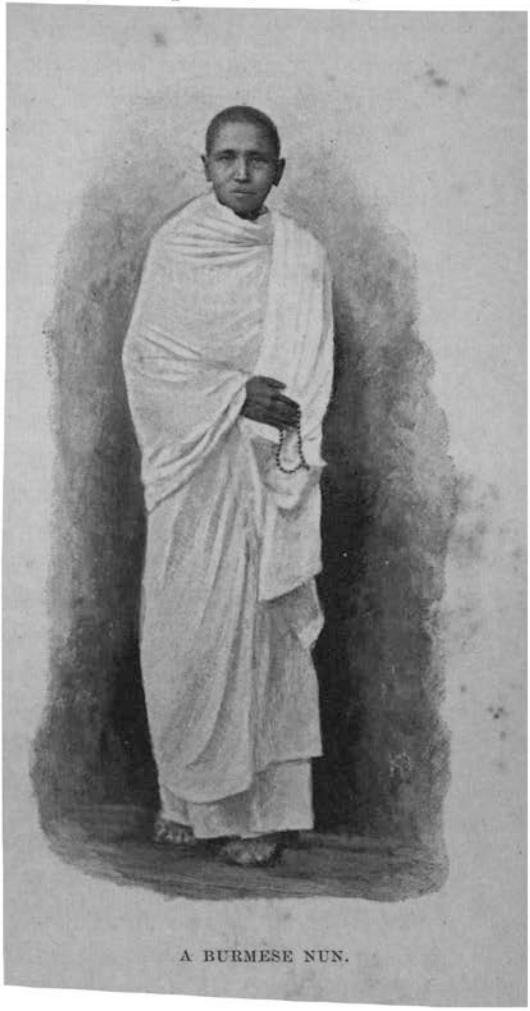
The Burmese house is simple enough in its construction, but it is simpler still in its internal arrangements, and the Burman excels even the Japanese in having mastered the art of living happily with few belongings. Chairs, tables, and bedsteads are all dispensed with. A bamboo or rush mat laid on the floor within mosquito nets suspended from the roof, and a block of bamboo for a pillow, make a cool and excellent bed in a hot climate; a few rugs and blankets are used in the winter, when the nights are damp and chilly. The entire *service de table* consists of a large circular dish and a few plates and lacquer bowls. The rice for the meal is either cooked in the open air, or on a fire-box placed in the middle of the room and filled with earth, ashes, and fuel. I have seen many a picturesque scene in the cottages of the riverside jungle villages, when the mother was preparing the evening meal, while the children squatted round the leaping flames issuing from the fuel-box in the centre of the room. Once I remember watching a woman baking, or rather roasting, thin flat circular cakes over the blue flames of a wood-fire, in the dark road under the stars, by the simple process of

tossing the cakes from one two-pronged fork to another. A group of naked children sat around on the ground, and watched the proceedings with the greatest interest. The woman presented me with some of the results of her baking, and I must say they were excellent, very much like Jewish Passover cakes.

The good terms existing between children and their parents is obvious on such familiar family occasions, of which the open houses and the outdoor life enable one to be a witness. Indeed, the Burmans give an example to many of us English Christians in the gentle and kindly treatment of their children. The Rev. Benjamin Waugh would find no work to do in heathen Burma, and would not have to make enormous efforts to raise funds to protect little children from the cruelty of their parents. I must not omit to mention one of the chief and largest articles of furniture in a Burmese cottage, and that is the basket-cradle, slung from the cross-beam, in which the baby, snugly wrapped up, lies in safety, and is rocked to sleep by a devoted mother to the music of many a pretty lullaby. In fact, a mat, a mosquito net, two or three rugs, a round circular dish, a few plates and lacquer bowls, a cocoa-nut cup, a betel-box, and a cradle, constitute nearly the full complement of furniture required by a married couple in Burma.

Outside the country cottages are set the rice-mill, where the rice is husked by the merry girls of the household, and the loom, on which is woven with bright coloured silk yarns and silver thread, bought from the Chinamen in the bazaar, the pretty tameins and pasohs which are worn on duty days or at the races. I have been surprised at the beautiful and dainty silk fabrics which I have seen being woven on primitive hand-looms standing in the open or under a thatched shelter in some jungle village, where my visit was treated as an event of considerable interest. I remember in a village not

far from Shwebo, going into a cottage occupied by two nuns, where, with the assistance of my companion, who spoke Burmese fluently, I tried to carry on a conversation. The simple nuns had never seen, they said, a white woman, and were so impressed that, after humbly *shekoeing*[1] me, they began to rattle off Pali doxologies on their knees. While sitting on the floor, and feeling somewhat embarrassed at these unwonted attentions, a small crowd gathered at the open house front, when one woman more curious than the rest shouted out, "Ask her how old she is." This is, however, not considered an impertinent question, as in Europe, but one showing a sympathetic and kindly interest in you. In royal receptions it was always the first question asked, and to omit it was a sign of discourtesy. So much was this the case, that once in the official reception of a British envoy, the minister forgot to ask him his age,



A BURMESE NUN.

[1] To *shekoe* is to fold the hands together, put them up to the forehead, and to bow the head low while kneeling and sitting back on the soles of the feet.

which omission was subsequently apologised for. With me it was generally followed by other questions, "Is your husband kind to you?" "What makes you come to this country?" and then, curiosity overcoming politeness, "What makes you so big?" the Burmese woman with her lithe spare figure not being troubled with embonpoint.

To return to the cottage-homes of Burma, outside almost every one there is to be found a broad bench or small platform raised about two feet from the ground, on which the men sleep or smoke in the daytime, and the women sit and gossip, or wind bright coloured silks. A plot of ground, surrounded by a high bamboo fence, is attached to each house, where a few papayas, palms, and cannas are cultivated, and where probably the country cart is kept.

These country carts are picturesque objects; the boat-shaped variety, with solid wheels of padouk wood, the greaseless axles of which creak and shriek as they roll along the rutty roads in the woods, is drawn by a pair of active and delightful little buffaloes, decorated with bells and the gaily ornamented harness peculiar to Burma. On this cart a hood, resembling a great sunbonnet, may be fitted; but the pretty light cart with spoked wheels is what is used by the family to go to the pagoda on fête days, or to take the women to market.

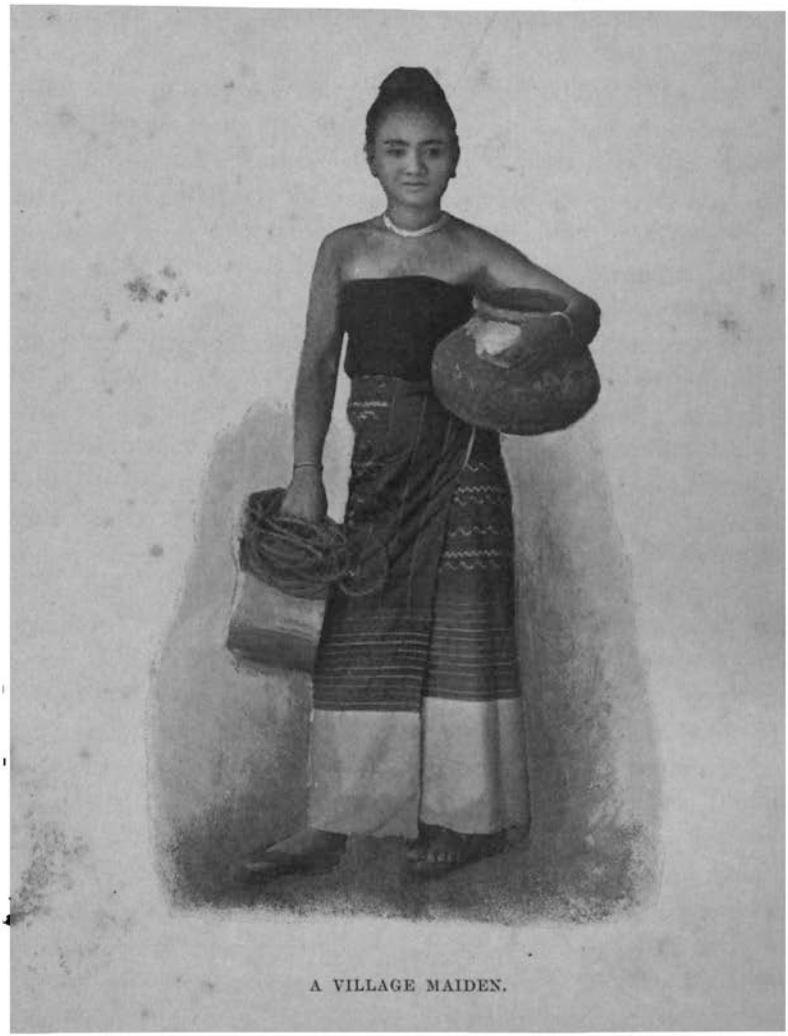
Domestic life is happy and peaceful in Burma: ambition does not ruffle its calm, and the feverish desire to be doing something does not break in upon its monotony. The Burman has no desire to be rich; to have money enough to make gifts to the pagoda and to the phongyees, and to be able now and then to give himself and his neighbours the pleasure of seeing a pwé (or play), is all that he demands in the way of wealth. No misfortune can quench his natural gaiety of heart, and to live peacefully with his neighbours, and to achieve some act of merit, which will make things safe for him in the next world, are his chief desires. To quarrel with anybody would

not be worth while, and to quarrel with his wife, who is in every sense his better half, would be the height of folly. So married couples jog on happily and comfortably together. A Burmese wife does not romantically expect her husband to be a hero, but the man expects his wife to be a capable partner,

A COUNTRY CART.

able and willing to take her full share in the affairs of life, in return for which she is honoured and loved. In nearly every house there is a stall where the women sell some kind of merchandise. Except when the rice crop is being sown or gathered, the men are not very busy, but by means of smoking, chewing betel, and gossiping with neighbours, they manage to while away the day, and in the evening, pwés,

marionettes, improvisations by peripatetic poets, and country dances serve to pass the time joyously and happily.



A VILLAGE MAIDEN.

Only two meals a day are taken, the first at about nine o'clock in the morning and the other at sunset, and they con-

sist of (as Dr. Marks told me when I asked him what was the diet of his boys), "rice and curry in the morning and curry and rice in the evening." The rice is heaped on the great red dish in the middle of the floor, and the curry is served in little bowls. The leaves of tamarind and mango trees, young bamboo shoots, wild asparagus, and fleshy water-plants are used, together with oil, onions, garlic, hot peppers, cayennes, chillies, &c., all of which are stewed together in a thin vegetable stock. Delicacies are added in the way of ngapee, or a species of red ant (*Formica smaragdina*) fried in oil, and a certain fat maggot, resembling a silkworm, used to be a special dainty at the royal table. An animal that has died from any cause will not be despised for food, and will provide the richest curry, and, as already told, snakes and serpents, deprived of their heads, are thought fit for food. Venison is also supplied from the forests. A strict Buddhist will not kill any animal soever for food. The Karens are stated to emulate the tiger in their fondness for the flesh of pythons, and pickled crocodile is not unknown. Turtle eggs, which are found in great abundance on the sandbanks of the Irrawaddy and on certain islands, are much appreciated. No knives or forks, nor even chop-sticks, are used in eating, the fingers serving all purposes.

Water is the national drink. A Burman does not, however, drink while eating, but after eating rinses out his mouth with water.

Tea is a necessary article of diet to every Burman; it is not, however, infused and drunk, but is pickled and eaten with a little salt, oil, garlic, or asafœtida at the conclusion of a meal, in the same way as we eat cheese. Presentations of small packets of pickled tea form part of every ceremony and festival, and invitations to a wedding or a pwé are sent verbally, accompanied with a packet of pickled tea.

The Burmese are cleanly in their personal habits, and a bath in the river or at the well, by pouring water over the

whole body, is taken once or twice a day. The hair of both men and women is worn very long, and they are extremely vain of it should it reach to the knees or ankles. Where nature has not been so generous, tails of false hair are not despised. The men gather their long black tresses into a knot at the top of the head, and it is kept up by winding a bright coloured handkerchief jauntily round the head, as a turban. The women have their hair neatly dressed in rolls and bows, and the smooth black coils are often crowned by sweet-smelling flowers. The men's dress consists of a silk "pasoh" woven in bright coloured checks and stripes; this garment is merely a long piece of silk about one and a quarter yards deep, and about six yards long; it is wound round the hips, one end being tucked in in front, and the remainder gathered into loose graceful folds, or is thrown, scarf-fashion, over one shoulder. A short white jacket is worn, and in the winter, or on occasions

A BURMESE GENTLEMAN.

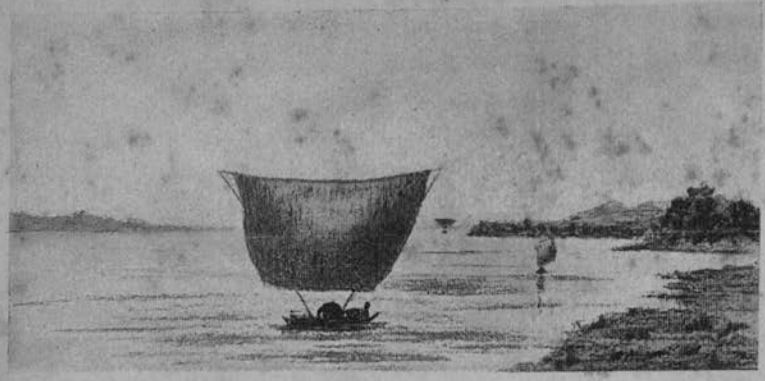
of ceremony, this garment is covered by a long white or fur-lined coat.

The women's dress is similar, but the tamein or skirt is very narrow, not more than fifty or sixty inches broad, and longer than it is broad. The upper part is made of a dark cotton material, the middle third consists of a beautifully woven silk damask in brilliant colours and conventional design, and the lower third, which sweeps the ground, is of a plainer pattern, generally in stripes and woven in lighter tones to harmonise with the rich damask of the centre. The effect is very pleasing, and the tameins of ladies, who take great care to have them woven in tones and blends to suit their correct taste, are charming examples of the art and skill of the weaver. The tamein is wound tightly round the hips and is attached by tucking in one end. The opening is in front, and to prevent the immodest display of naked limbs in walking, a Burmese girl cultivates, much like the Japanese beauty, a peculiar method of locomotion by throwing out the heels and hips, which would be exceedingly ugly in an English woman, but somehow seems to be proper and graceful in the closely robed women of Burma and Japan. Under the tamein is generally worn a kind of petticoat and shift in one, like a narrow sack open at both ends, and fastened above the bosom. A white jacket covers the body, and a bright coloured silk scarf is worn across the shoulders, and is folded round the throat when the chilly morning mists lie low. In the case of native Christians, it is worn over the head instead of a bonnet, when the wearer is at church or chapel. The feet are shod with sandals, attached by a strap passing between the big and second toes. The sandals worn by ladies are often prettily embroidered.

The Burmese man is rather below the medium height of an European, but he has a strong, well-knit frame, and by the habit of living, it may be said, always in the open air—for the

walls of a bamboo matting house are not weather-proof—and of going unclothed till nearly the age of puberty, he is able to endure exposure and fatigue under conditions which break down an English soldier. The women are small, with slender figures and narrow hips, and are active and energetic in their movements. The children gave me the impression of perfect health and robustness; whether this condition is due to the survival of the fittest, or to the natural open-air life they lead, I do not know, but probably both causes are at work.

The climate of Burma is less inimical to Europeans than that of India proper. In Rangoon, after the monsoon breaks, the weather becomes cooler. English ladies stay there five or seven years without finding it necessary for their health to go home. In Mandalay the summer heats are very trying, and in the valley of the Upper Irrawaddy the swampy condition of the soil, when the river retires to its banks after the floods, induces malaria. At Maulmain the rainfall is excessive, reaching sometimes the high figure of over 180 inches in the year; 12 inches have been known to fall in one day. The winter weather, such as we experienced in Burma throughout the length of the country, from Rangoon to Bhamo, was delightful. The nights were cool above Mandalay, even chilly, and the days brilliant and not too warm,—except in Rangoon,—to prevent one going out in the middle of the day. When the country is more fully opened up by railways, good health resorts will doubtless be found on the Chin hills, where the English may reside during the summer heats, and which may enable them to make Burma their home, instead of, as now, merely a place in which to make money and to leave directly they have done so. The establishment of a genuine colony in the far East would be an achievement worthy of the English genius of colonisation, and is probably possible of attainment in Burma.



FISHER BOATS SAILING BEFORE THE WIND.

A Charcoal Drawing by the Author, from a Photograph.

CHAPTER X

THE BURMAN AT PLAY

IT is in his carved river-boat that the Burman is seen to the greatest advantage, and there is no object more picturesque on the Irrawaddy than the graceful paddy-boat with its high carved steering-chair, raised twelve or fifteen feet from the water, in which the steersman, dressed in gay-coloured pasoh, sits up aloft, grasping the tiller of the immense rudder-paddle in his hand, and looking out with intent gaze over the broad shining river for shallows and sandbanks. Lovely also is it to see these and smaller craft speeding before the wind, each with a single immense sail hanging from a bamboo yard 120 or 130 feet long. As a fleet of these boats pass up the river, with the sun shining on their vast bellying sheets, they look like colossal white seagulls skimming the blue waters. The management of the simple dug-out by a Burmese fisher-

man, amidst the dangerous eddies and currents of the river, is a subject of frequent astonishment to those who have tested its difficulties by experience. The old war-boats of the Burmese, which played so large a part in the first and second Burmese wars, were magnificent objects. Of elegant canoe build, they were made by scooping out the trunk of a single gigantic teak tree, partly by fire and partly by cutting. They varied in length from sixty to a hundred feet, and were rowed by crews of from sixty to seventy men, who as they dipped their oars kept time with their voices to the melodious chant of the war-song. The boats were often splendidly gilded, and were decorated with flags and banners. On the prow, which was raised and flat, a piece of ordnance was mounted. Each oarsman had a sword and lance beside him as he rowed. In addition to the boatmen there were usually thirty soldiers on board armed with muskets. "Thus prepared," says Colonel Michael Symes,[1] "they go in fleets to meet the foe, and when in sight, draw up in a line, presenting their prows to the enemy. Their attack is extremely impetuous; they advance with great rapidity, and sing a war-song, at once to encourage their people, daunt their adversaries, and regulate the strokes of their oars. They generally endeavour to grapple, and when that is effected, the action becomes very severe, as these people are endued with great courage, strength, and activity. . . . The vessels being low in the water, their greatest danger is that of being run down by a larger boat striking their broadside, a misfortune which the steersman is taught to dread and to avoid above all others. It is surprising to see the facility with which they steer and elude each other in their mock combats. The rowers are also practised to row backwards and impel the vessel with the stern foremost; this is the mode of retreat, by means of which the artillery still bears upon their opponents."

It was a triumphant day in Ava when, on January 1, 1824,

[1] Symes' "Embassy to Ava," 1795.

IN THE CARVED STEERING CHAIR.

the war-boats were drawn up in order on the Irrawaddy, in the presence of the king and the court, to take on board Maha Bandula, the Burmese Wellington, and 6000 picked troops, to proceed to Arakan with the bold object of fighting the English on their Indian frontier, and if successful, of pushing on to Bengal. "A fleet of magnificent war-boats," says an eye-witness, "many of them richly gilded, were in readiness to receive the troops at mid-day, who embarked in perfect order. Each man was attired in a comfortable campaigning jacket of black cloth, thickly wadded and quilted with cotton, and was armed with a musket or spear and shield, as suited the corps to which he belonged. A profusion of flags with gay devices were unfurled to the breeze, martial music resounded, the chiefs took their seats at the prows of their boats (the post of honour, as the stern is with us), and in the middle of each boat a soldier, selected for his skill, danced a kind of hornpipe. When all was ready, the whole fleet, lining the shore for a considerable distance, dashed all at once across the river, nearly a mile wide; the loud song burst from 6000 lusty throats, while the strokes from thousands of oars and paddles kept time to their music."[1]

The same gorgeous paraphernalia was seen, and the same tuneful and exultant war-songs were heard, when the Burmese met the English troops on the Irrawaddy. Bandula was encamped in his fortress at Donubyu, when one evening a sortie was made in the war-boats which departed so gaily from Ava. "Seventeen gilt war-boats," says the chronicler of the campaign,[2] "each with a chief and gilt chattah, and carrying from fifty to eighty men, all uniformly dressed in black jackets and red head-dresses, and mounting a piece of heavy ordnance, pulled from under the walls of the fort, the crews singing their boat-song in chorus as they simultaneously dipped their oars in the water. When they arrived within three hundred

[1] Gouger's "Prisoner in Burmah." [2] "Two Years in Ava."

yards of our camp, each boat in succession fired its gun, and then dropped a little way down to reload."

The speed attained by skilful rowers was so great that war-boats could go down-stream faster than a steamer. In fact, the attainment of speed and the dexterous management of these long boats was the subject of constant practice, and boat-races and regattas were among the greatest pastimes of the Burmese.

In the old royal days of Ava these were gorgeous affairs. The wide river would be covered with hundreds of splendidly carved and decorated boats, the skilful rowers of which performed difficult and graceful evolutions with extraordinary rapidity of movement before the King and Queen, who were seated in their royal boat called the "Water Palace." This was a magnificent barge surmounted by a seven-storied and handsomely carved spire or pyat. Every inch of the barge was richly gilt, even to the paddles. In the bows were the figures of the carrying bird of Vishnu and of a griffin in mirror mosaic;[1] just behind these was the seat of honour, and here the King and Queen sat under a green canopy, shaded by white umbrellas, and watched the races and the feats of the rowers. All down the river-bank were ranged the gilded boats of the nobles, bedecked with banners, and on which dancers and musicians gave added gaiety to the scene. The boats that were entered for the races belonged to the King or the nobles, or were sent from different districts and towns, the chiefs of which vied with one another in furnishing the most beautiful and well-manned craft. The winning-post was a canoe moored mid-stream with its bows pointing against the current. Across the bows was stretched a long bamboo rod, through the hollow centre of which was passed a rattan, projecting a few inches at either end. Each racing boat kept to its own side of the river,

[1] These figures stand now in the garden of the house of the manager of the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company at Mandalay.

and on passing the winning-post the bow-paddler stood up and drew the rattan out of the bamboo,—no easy task at the terrific speed at which the boats were being driven by the rapid current and the powerful strokes of the numerous rowers. The race was rowed down-stream for a distance of about two miles, and the goal was opposite the King's "Water Palace." Feats of skilful water-craft were also performed on these occasions, one of the most popular of which was to propel a boat against stream by simply beating the air with the paddles, and also when racing at full speed to let the paddles fall suddenly and play on the water so as to raise a shower of spray like the mist of a waterfall. The day ended with a royal pageant. The King and Queen left the "Water Palace," and stepping on to their splendid state boat, they seated themselves on thrones in the centre. On the signal of three discharges of cannon, the King and Queen proceeded up and down the course, surrounded by a number of gilt war-boats and followed by a large retinue of nobility in gorgeous vessels; the people making the most profound obeisances as they passed. "The setting sun shone brilliantly upon a profusion of barbaric gold, and the pageant was altogether the most splendid and imposing which I have ever seen, and not unworthy of Eastern romance," says Mr. Crawfurd, after describing the royal boat-races at Ava. At Amaurapoora the races were held on one of the immense lakes in the suburbs of the city.

But in cities which were not royal, and where the King's "Water Palace" had never been seen, boat-races used to form the occasion of an immense amount of popular excitement and enthusiasm; for the credit of the town or village was at stake, and the winner who wrested the rattan from the bamboo at the winning-post had gained an honour for his native place which had no equal in Burmese opinion. Where the populace were not overawed by the august presence of royalty, they could crowd the banks of the river and direct their whole

attention to the races; enjoyment was then unmarred, and enthusiasm unrestrained. Everybody on these occasions was out on the river-banks dressed in their best; girls in dainty tameins with crowns of flowers on their heads, and with all their most costly and showy jewellery on their necks and arms; young men rushed about in the greatest excitement, and bags of rupees in the hands of the older men were evidence of the fact that racing and betting are as closely connected in Burma as they are in England. Before the boats start, votive offerings of rice, flowers, and betel are made to propitiate the guardian spirit of the river. As the rival boats come swinging down the course at an amazing pace, the excitement on the banks becomes intense. "The noise is simply deafening. Incoherent shouts of despair and encouragement and delight burst from every throat; old women tear down their scanty hair and work with their arms as if they were themselves in the race; girls rush to the water's edge heedless of the mud and splashing that will ruin their silken skirts for ever; young men and boys rush up to their necks in the water and yell with frenzied eagerness. Wild cries go up as the two boats near the winning post, 'Row for your lives!' 'Row for your unvanquished names!' The two bows fling their paddles from them and rise for the struggle. The flash of an eye too soon, and he will miss his grasp; the flick of a finger too late, and there will be nothing to seize. A great hush falls on the crowd as if they were all struck dead, and then both men disappear in the water, clutching simultaneously at the rattan. An agonising five seconds, and then Oung Zahn comes to the surface brandishing on high the pan. The scene that follows beggars description. The victorious crew spring up to dance, but the relief is inadequate. They can only escape frenzy by plunging into the river. Ohn tucks up his waistcoat and dances round in mad delight, till his stiff old legs will bear him no longer. Pompous old poo-gyees caper and plunge and shout; younger men can only

ON PLEASURE BENT.

relieve their feelings by flinging themselves into the pools on the bank and rolling wildly in the mud; girls, who at ordinary times would hardly dare to raise their eyes to look about them, dance and shout in ecstasy, and their married guardians join in the rout. A general adjournment is then made back to the town. The country people have all come up in their bullock waggons, and these are drawn up in comfortable spots under the trees. The victorious crew go in procession up and down the main street, preceded by bands and by everybody in the place who can dance. Feasting is general, and afterwards all move off to the plays, of which there are three or four going on. The revelry goes on till dawn of day, but there is nothing like drunkenness. For two days the excitement lasts, and then the strangers wend their way homewards, and the town comes down to its usual quiet. But for years the great event will be talked at the local feasts, and the Yehn choruses of three or four generations will tell of the gallant struggle when the Doung-sat-pyan beat the Thohn-pan-hla and broke the long supremacy of the Thohn-kwa rowers."[1]

But these joyous, enthusiastic, and brilliant water contests were in the picturesque days of the past. Twenty years ago the then Chief Commissioner of British Burma, Mr. Rivers Thompson, actuated by the belief that the boat-races led to excessive gambling, issued an order forbidding Government officials to have anything to do with them; boat-races and ancient sports, in which so much national pride was felt, were severely discountenanced, but gambling nevertheless flourished as much as ever. When Mr. (now Sir T.) Bernard became Chief Commissioner, his sympathies with the Burmese and with manly sports induced him to revive the ancient boat-racing contests, and these were held again on the Great Royal Lake at Rangoon. To preserve the national amusements is surely a wise thing.

[1] Shway Yoe, "The Burman."

The Burmans particularly delight in fireworks, and exactly in the same way as we invite royal Oriental guests to witness a display of these at the Crystal Palace, so our various ambassadors to the court of Ava have always been entertained by a pyrotechnic show in Burma. We cannot, however, vie with the Burmese in the enormous size of their rockets. These are made by boring the solid trunks of trees; the tubes are from ten to twenty feet long, with a bore of nine or ten inches in diameter. They are filled with a composition of charcoal and saltpetre, rammed in very hard. Long bamboos are attached to form the tail of the rockets. The largest are sent off from platforms specially constructed; but owing to the extreme danger consequent on the fall of such immense rockets, firework displays take place during daylight. Fixed fireworks are shown at night, and the Burmese delight in displaying fountains throwing out hissing serpents, trees hung with flowers of purple flame, and inscriptions written against the sky in letters of fire. The Burmese probably got their knowledge and love of fireworks from the Chinese, as we did.

Football is a favourite game amongst the Burmese, but it is played in an entirely different way than is the custom in England. The ball is hollow, made of open wicker-work, and very light. The object of the player is to keep up the ball as long as possible without touching it with the hand. When playing, the feet are bare and the pasoh is tucked up high round the loins. The aim of the skilful player is to hit the ball always straight up into the air, for if sent diagonally it is captured by another player. The knees, the soles of the feet, and the heel are used, but the toes and any part of the arm are debarred. The game may be played alone or by a group of young men, and the exercise it gives all the muscles of the body is excellent.

Boxing and wrestling are much practised by the Burmese, and at festivals a ring is made, seats are raised around it, and

the proceedings are watched with great interest by the crowd. A band of music is of course in attendance. The combatants are stripped with the exception of the loin-cloth, and each man is attended by a second. "As the combatants advance, each carefully watches his opponent's eye, with one arm in reserve and the other put out and withdrawn, as if feeling the distance, the music playing as they draw near each other; gradually the measure quickens, the muscular movements of the combatants seem to keep time to it—a feint, a blow dodged, a right and a left home—the music faster and faster—a cross-buttock cleverly escaped, and another blow home. The kettle-drums dance madly in their circular frames; the combatants close, hug, and trip, and as they come to the ground the seconds rush in and separate them; the music dies away, the musicians perhaps more exhausted than the combatants themselves. Then prizes of gay silks or muslin turbans are distributed to the gladiators, the winner's share being more costly than the loser's. The combatants show admirable temper on these occasions throughout.[1] The contest is perfectly friendly and kindly, and the first drop of blood drawn from a cut lip or elsewhere decides the fight."

The Burman is a born gambler, and games of chance, in which betting plays an important part, are his favourites, but the British Government, tenderly solicitous for the morals and the pockets of the people, discountenance them. The chief and most popular of these games is that played with the seeds of the monstrous pods of the *Entada Pursœtha*. It is known in Burmese by the name of "gohn-nyin toh pwe," from *gohn*, to jump, and *nyin*, to deny or bluster. The name, like most Burmese names, is very significant and descriptive, for the game is noisy and contentious in the extreme, and leads to so much gambling, betting, and quarrelling, that the police do their best to put it down. The beans used are about the size and shape of

[1] Fytche's "Burmah."

a sheep's kidney. They are placed in a line on the ground, and the object is, as in ninepins, to knock down as many as possible at a single shot made with another bean, which is poised on the bent fore-finger of the left hand, and projected by a flick of the finger and thumb of the right hand. There are a great variety of ways of playing "gohn-nyin," and the skill required to make the seeds fall as desired is greater than is at first apparent. The game is played in "alleys," where the ground is kept soft and smooth; the keeper supplies the beans, and charges two annas apiece for them, and as the playing and gambling lead to endless and often noisy disputes, he is frequently called in to act as umpire. Burmans are devoted to "gohn-nyin," and boys love to play it out of school-hours, as boys in England play with marbles. Chess is with the Burmans, as with us, a more serious affair; but the game is different to ours. The pieces consist of a king, a lieutenant-general, two war-chariots, two elephants, two horsemen, and eight pawns or foot-soldiers. The king moves as in the English game, but cannot castle; the general can advance diagonally or retreat one square at a time; the war-chariots move like our castles; the elephants can move one square directly forward or diagonally backwards or forwards; the two horsemen are like the English knights, and the foot-soldiers move in the same way as our pawns, except that they can advance only one square in the initial move. The principal pieces can be arranged as desired by the player; the game is complicated and is fought on the lines of military tactics. Distinguished players are watched with intense interest, and the betting on the game is often heavy.

Cock-fighting is now forbidden by the police, but the Burmese have been so long devoted to this pastime that, in spite of the authorities, gamecocks are still pitted against one another in villages, and in out-of-the-way places. In the olden days every house had its gamecock, and village communities prided themselves on the victories of their champions.

Sangermano says that the cocks were trained to fight with knives on their spurs. Cock-fighting was, moreover, a royal pastime, and Pagan Men was, like our King Charles II., so fond of it that he was called "the cock-fighting king."

A BURMESE GIRL.

New year's festivals, religious feasts, weddings, ear-boring ceremonies, and pwés all give the Burmans plenty of opportunities for jollity and fun; but, as in the merry days of old England, the harvest festival is the most innocent and idyllic of them all, and illustrates in a striking way how everything in Burma, even business, is inextricably mixed up with religious duty, almsgiving, and fun; a triad which finds its counterpart in the English charity bazaar, but with this difference, that in Burma the alliance is spontaneous, and does not require the great exertions of a committee and a subscription list. When the rice harvest has been safely gathered in, the farmer decides, out of the fulness of his heart, to make a present of rice to the monks at the village kioung and to his poorer neighbours. On these occasions the grain is not given away in a raw state, but is made into a mess composed of onions, ginger, pepper, sesamum seeds, and sliced cocoa-nut, which are well boiled with the rice and then go by the name of "tamané." But before this, the rice has to be husked. This is, as a rule, done by the women of the household, but a harvest festival is an occasion for gallantry and flirtation, and the young men of the village are called upon to husk the rice for the girls. A lucky evening having been selected by

the aid of the astrologer, the guests are invited by sending them small packets of pickled tea, with a request that they would come that evening to the house of the farmer to help him husk his rice for presentation to the pagoda. At nightfall quite a large party is collected, all dressed in their best, in the gayest of tempers, and determined to have a night of fun and frolic. The process of husking is simple. Attached to a long beam is a heavy wooden pestle which falls by its weight into a mortar; the pestle is raised and depressed by a person stepping on and off the free end. A little paddy is thrown into the mortar, the pestle falls and rises, and the rice is every now and then winnowed by taking it up and letting it fall back into the mortar while blowing off the husk. For the nonce the young men step on and off the long beam while the maidens wait on them, chat, laugh, and flirt. Work is not the order of the night, but enjoyment, and the task of preparing the tamané is diversified by pwés, the recitations of the local poet and singer, and the jokes and travesties of the clown. Day is dawning when the party breaks up, and the farmer and his family then carry to the monastery the dish of savoury rice, which is presented in a special spire-shaped box; in return the abbot gives no thanks or blessings, but solemnly exhorts the donors to keep the Ten Precepts and to live virtuously. Thus ends the harvest festival: the monks have been fed, the farmer has gained "merit," the young men and maidens have had "a good time," and "nobody in the whole place has been drunk, and if there is an opium-eater in the village, he has not been asked to the feast and has had none of the tamané."[1]

[1] See a delightful account of a harvest festival in Shway Yoe's "Burman."

CHAPTER XI

THE BURMAN AT WORK

THE cynical British trader, whose ideal of existence is to spend all the best years of his short life in unremitting toil, so that he may either hoard in old age or spend when the power of enjoyment is lost, will exclaim on reading the heading of this chapter, "The Burman does not work; he does not know how to work." True, the Burman has a totally different view of the need for and the pleasure of work than the civilised European. Work for work's sake is to him an unintelligible principle of action, and Mrs. Browning's dictum, "Get work; 'tis better far than what you work to get," is to him utter folly. The doctrine of the book of Genesis, that work is the curse of man, is, on the other hand, accepted by him to the fullest extent, and he has long ago made up his mind that he will have as little of this curse as is contrivable. That "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy," we believe sufficiently to make into an adage. The Burman is determined, above all things, that he will not be dull, but will get as much fun, laughter, and careless leisure out of life as possible; and who shall say he is wrong? Have the strenuous exertions of the busy denizens of the restless West resulted in producing that will-o'-the-wisp, happiness? Who will answer yes? The millionaire, eating his heart out with anxiety over the fluctuations of the markets? or the millions toiling in the factories and slums of our dismal cities, and who never know, as the poorest Burman does, what it is to dance in the street from pure gladness of heart, and to rejoice that for him the sun shines and the flowers bloom? It is well

to learn the lesson that there are other views of life than those of the West, and to remember that, while we label the Burman lazy because he does not appreciate the pleasure of sustained effort, and has not tasted the fierce joy of attacking the apparently impossible and conquering it, yet he has probably extracted more undiluted pleasure and gaiety out of life than one in ten thousand of the inhabitants of Europe, who are as poor and simple as himself. As to live is our portion and to die is our fate, there may be as much wisdom in enjoyment and laughter as in unceasing toil and restless energy,—at least so the Burman thinks. He will work, however, to obtain the means of livelihood, and thus it comes about that the cultivation of rice, the staple article of diet, is the principal occupation in Burma.

In the lowlands of the delta rice cultivation is a very easy task. The south-west monsoon floods the land and turns it into a morass. The soil is then churned up with a primitive rake-like kind of plough, and is smoothed by rolling. This process takes place in the month of June. At the beginning of August the young plants of paddy, which have been grown meantime in nurseries on higher ground, are ready to be planted out. Holes are dibbled at the distance of a few inches apart in the soft puddled earth, and in each hole two young plants are inserted. This is hard work in the hot August weather, and the women and children take a large share of it. In two months the crop is ready for harvesting. The ears of grain are cut off with sickles, and are carried on sledges or carts to the threshing-floor. The soft earth has been baked hard by the summer sun, so that there is no need to build a barn. Into the smooth bare ground, which has been swept clean, a stake is driven: the paddy (unhusked rice) is placed in a circle round the stake, and the bullocks or buffaloes slowly tread out the grain. It is then winnowed by the simple process of a man pouring baskets of grain from an elevated position on to

THE STEERING CHAIR OF THE BIG PADDY BOAT.

a sloping bamboo mat. The paddy is then conveyed to the great rice-boat, with its high carved steering-chair, which is waiting in the creek for the cargo. Before the rice is shipped, however, an offering is given to the kioung, and the completion and sale of the paddy harvest, which is indeed often sold before it is planted, is made the cause of a village festival and of careless fun, laughter, and enjoyment. The paddy is then conveyed to the great rice-cleansing mills at Rangoon or Bassein.

The work is very slight, and the profits of rice cultivation are high; but the Burmese farmers, through reckless gambling and extravagant spending on pwés and pagodas, are unfortunately almost to a man in the hands of the sleek and grasping Madrassee money-lender.

In Upper Burma, the paddy farms have to be irrigated in order to bear heavy crops; but this is not a matter of difficulty, for the Irrawaddy and the Chindwind rivers overflow their banks after the melting of the snows in the mountains and the breaking of the south-west monsoon. An immense area of country is then laid under water, and irrigation is carried out either by building dams, or by raising water by means of jars attached to a wheel, in the same way as is done in the valley of the Nile.

On the hillsides rice is also cultivated by the wild hill tribes, but solely for their own support, and not for trade or barter. The method adopted is very extravagant. A large clearing is made by felling the forest trees, which are afterwards burnt, in order to provide the soil with the phosphates it requires. The ground is then hoed up and the paddy planted. A very meagre crop is produced, notwithstanding the cost at which it is obtained. The Forest Department now do their utmost to prevent this extravagant destruction of trees.

Owing to the literary education which has been introduced with English rule, an immense number of young Burmans are now being educated to take posts as clerks. They do fairly well

in these positions; they do not show a Teutonic greed for work, but they evince a tender sensibility which is very appreciative of kindness, and they are most sensitive to reproach and harshness. A Burman will not stand hard words, and a hectoring Englishman, accustomed to Indian ways, and to give vent to his spleen on his servants, will find to his surprise that his amiable *lughli*[1] will not reply to his rude outbursts, but when pay-day comes he will receive a note saying that his Burmese clerk or servant prefers to seek another place. In this respect, as in many others, the Burman resembles the Japanese, to whom kind words are more than coronets.

The Burman is not fond of domestic service, but, if kindly and gently treated, he will serve his master faithfully. The discipline of the life of the soldier or policeman is inimical to him, and steady labour exacted daily is quite distasteful. His courage is also of the evanescent order. Many attempts have been made to use the Burmese as troops and police, but they have been given up, and the country is now garrisoned and policed by brave and hardy Goorkha and Sikh regiments. Officials have told me that a Burman would desert from his regiment, taking care to leave his regimentals behind him, and would on being arrested express the greatest surprise. "Why, he had taken nothing; he had left his clothes behind; he was tired of a soldier's life, and had simply gone into the country for a little rest and change."

In the old days of Burmese government soldiering was no child's play. Every Burman, with the exception of merchants, foreigners, or sons of foreigners, might be called upon to become a soldier at the king's pleasure; but there is abundant evidence to prove that the Burman never was a soldier at heart, and that he hated to be dragged from home and family and sent to the King's wars in Siam, Arakan, or Manipur. When a warlike expedition was resolved upon, the King decided the number

[1] Equivalent to the Indian "boy."

of men that should be called out. The Supreme Council in the capital and the heads of the villages then stated the number of men each department and village should provide. The wealthy could buy themselves off, and thus the funds would be raised to defray the expenses of the war. Married men were preferred as soldiers, as their wives and children were then retained as hostages and sureties for the fidelity and good behaviour of their relatives. Desertion or cowardice in the presence of the enemy might be paid for, and indeed were paid for, by the lives of those nearest and dearest to the culprits. As soon as the order for marching came, the soldiers left their farms and their crops ungathered, and assembled in different corps. Their weapons were given out to them, and throwing their rifles over their shoulders, they hung from one end a mat on which to sleep, a blanket to cover them at night, a store of powder, and a small cooking vessel, and from the other end a provision of rice, salt, and ngapee. Thus accoutred, they travelled in their ordinary dress, without waggons and without tents. Their food consisted of rice and curry, with herbs and leaves gathered in the forest; at night they bivouacked on the bare ground, without any protection from the night air, the dew, or even the rain.[1]

The extremely rapid movement of large bodies of troops in the Burmese wars was the subject of constant remark, and this is easily understood when the lightness of their equipment is considered. The lightning marches and flights of the dacoits were due to the same cause, and gave them great advantage over the heavily-accoutred and baggage-laden British soldiers. Though war and soldiering were for centuries the chief occupation of the Burmese, the army was an undisciplined mass of men. They hardly ever fought in the open, but behind stockades and mounds of earth, which were very rapidly thrown up. Discipline was maintained by the most rigorous punishments;

[1] Sangermano.

officers had power of life and death over all beneath them; the sword was always hanging over the soldier, and the slightest disposition to flight or reluctance to advance infallibly brought it down upon him. Ever present with him was the dreadful fate which awaited those dearest to him if he failed in his duty as a soldier, for the wives and children of the men who deserted were taken and burnt alive. The courage of the Burmese soldiers was, therefore, stimulated by fear; but when restraint was withdrawn and the Burmese were invaders in a foreign country, they were most cruel in victory.

The work done by the Burmese as wood-carvers, bell-founders, and lacists is described in the chapter on Arts and Industries.

EMBROIDERED POWDER-BAG USED BY THE SOLDIERS OF KING THEEBAW.

CHAPTER XII

THE FREE AND HAPPY WOMAN OF BURMA

WOMEN in Burma are probably freer and happier than they are anywhere else in the world. Though Burma is bordered on one side by China, where women are held in contempt, and on the other by India, where they are kept in the strictest seclusion, Burmese women have achieved for themselves and have been permitted by their men to attain, a freedom of life and action that has no parallel among Oriental peoples. The secret lies, perhaps, in the fact that the Burmese woman is active and industrious while the Burmese man is indolent and often a recluse. Becoming, therefore, both by taste and by habit the money-earner, the bargainer and the financier of the household, she has asserted and obtained for herself the right to hold what she wins and the respect due to one who can and does direct and control. Things are strangely reversed in Burma, for here we see man as the religious soul of the nation and woman its brain. Burmese women are born traders, and it is more often the wife than the husband who drives the bargain with the English buyer for the paddy harvest, or, at any rate, she is present on the occasion and helps her easy-going husband to stand firm. So highly is trading esteemed, that a daughter of well-to-do parents, and even a young married woman, will set up a booth in the bazaar, and, dressed in a bright silk tamein (skirt) and white jacket, with a flower jauntily stuck into her coiled black tresses, she will start every morning with a tray of sweetmeats, fruit, or toys on her head, and, with a gaiety and grace born of the sunshine and the

bounteousness of the land, will push a brisk trade all through the short and sunny day. The earnings thus made are the woman's own, and cannot be touched by her husband.

English officials told me that contracts for army forage and for timber were often made with women-traders, and that they well understood the art of "holding up the market."

The education of women was in times gone by *nil*, and all that is thought necessary to teach them at present is to read and write. To be pretty, to be religious, to be amiable and gay-hearted, and to have a good business instinct, are all that is demanded of a woman in Burma; presently, when she comes to learn the advantages which education confers in dealing with the ubiquitous foreigner, she will doubtless demand it as her *right*. At present she fulfils all expectations. To charm is her openly avowed aim, and few things human are more charming than a group of Burmese women going up to the pagoda to worship at a festival. With her rainbow-tinted silk tamein fastened tightly round her slender figure, her spotlessly clean short jacket modestly covering the bosom, and with her abundant black tresses smoothly coiled on the top of her head, in the braids of which nestles a bouquet of sweet-smelling flowers, the Burmese young woman knows full well she is an object to be admired.

Perfectly well pleased with herself and contented with her world as it is, she gaily laughs and chats with her companions while puffing from time to time at an immense green cheroot. Amiable she is, as a matter of course, for are not the laws of Manu and Burma very particular in their denunciation of all who speak harshly and who use abusive words? Besides, what is there to vex her soul? She has not the thousand and one cares which harass the poor European housewife. Her home, built of bamboo and plaited mats, costs but a few rupees to erect, and can easily be restored if burnt down in a fire or shaken down in an earthquake. Her household goods

can be numbered on her five fingers, and could be carried on her back. Her boys are taught free at the monastery, and till her girls are old enough to have their ears bored, clothing

A BURMESE WOMAN SMOKING.

From a Drawing by Mr. Philip Miller.

for them is an item of the smallest expenditure, for little children are generally seen wearing nothing but a "necklace and a smile." Her stall at the bazaar will give her earnings enough to buy the brightest silk tamein to wear at the next

pagoda festival or boat race, and perhaps the money to win "merit" by purchasing packets of gold leaf to plaster on the stately statue of the holy Gautauma at the next full moon. Her husband treats her well; if not, if he neglects her, fails to provide for her, is unkind or abusive, she has but to go before the nearest magistrate and state her case, and he will grant a divorce, and she can depart with all her possessions and earnings. She has every reason to be happy, and to laugh gaily from pure light-heartedness as she carries her tray of goods to the bazaar, or her offering of fruit and flowers and gold-leaf to the pagoda.

Marriage in Burma is an affair of the heart. More often than not a Burmese girl chooses her own husband, but she is frequently aided in the selection by her parents, or by a go-between called an *oung bwé*. There are plenty of opportunities given for the meeting of young people of both sexes at the pagoda festivals, at the pwés or public plays, and at friends' houses on the occasions of marriages and funerals. Courting takes place in the evening, and a suitor for a girl's hand visits her at her father's house generally after eight o'clock. He does not come alone, but with his friends and supporters. The girl receives her lover alone or accompanied by a friend, and dressed in her best. The parents retire to another room, but, though not present at the interview, a bamboo house does not admit of secrecy, and the mother probably sees and hears all that goes on. Presents are exchanged, but not kisses and caresses, as these would be thought highly improper. When the young people have made up their minds to marry, the parents' consent is asked, and is almost invariably given, even though the intended husband may be very young, and not yet in a position to support a wife. But the happy-go-lucky Burman has great sympathy with love's young dream, and arrangements are made to take the young couple into the house of the parents, either of the bride or the bridegroom, for

the first few years, till the husband can afford to start a separate establishment. The marriage ceremony is not religious, the celibate Buddhist monks taking no part in such mundane affairs; but a great feast is given by the bride's parents, and the public pledging of troth is virtually the marriage ceremony. It is said that these marriages of boy and girl in the heyday of life and love are generally happy; warm family affection is one of the national traits of character, and kindness to one another is a religion and a habit.

The following funeral dirge, written by a Rangoon man on the death of his wife, breathes the spirit of the purest devotion, as we Westerns understand it. The translation is by the Burmese scholar, Shway Yoe:—

"Gone, gone art thou, sweet wife, gone far away,
Fair still and charmful, stretched on thy cold bier,
As erst thou wert upon that joyous day
When first I wed thee, gladsome brought thee here,
And joyed to think that thou wert mine. Ah, me!
The butterfly's silk wings are shred no more,
Ne'er more to rest upon thy head, Mah Mee—
Sweet name for wife affectionate! Deplore
Her death, ye Nats that forests rule and streams,
The hills and vales, the greater ye who guard
The sacred law, the holy shrines, the beams
Of silent moon, and sunlight baking hard
The hot scorched earth, nor scorchèd more and seared
Than is the parchment of my tortured heart.

Ay, thou wert mine when last I trod the earth,
Ere yet, all sinful, I was born a man;
And yet again, in yet another birth,
I'll claim thee, when maybe a happier Kan,
A fairer sum of merit, hardly won,
Will lead us on, linked-armed to linkèd death,
That, so progressing, joyful may we run
Through all life's changes, and with single breath,
Through heavens and Zahn and Rupa we may bound
To Neh'ban, blissful home of rest.

. . . . . .

Bow me low, grant me the holy calm."

Marriage in Burma is easily contracted. A girl cannot marry before she is twenty without the consent of her parents or guardians. Should she not, however, obtain this consent, the marriage is considered valid after three elopements. Marriage is viewed by the Burmans in the light of a partnership in which the wife has equal rights with the husband; theoretically the husband is lord of his wife, and has the control of the household, the children, and the family property, but this power cannot be exercised arbitrarily without consultation with the wife, and as she is often the bread-winner, her wishes are naturally deferred to.

The equality of women in marriage is particularly shown in the disposition of property. Property is divided into personal and joint. There has been no need in Burma for a Married Woman's Property Act, for all property belonging to a woman before marriage remains hers absolutely when she becomes a wife. The joint property consists of bequests by the parents or husband at the time of marriage for joint purposes, all profits arising since marriage from the employment or investment of the separate property of either husband or wife, and all property acquired by their mutual skill and industry. The husband cannot sell or alienate the joint property of himself and his wife without her consent or against her will, except when he manages the business or acts as her agent; also during the continuance of marriage neither the husband nor wife has the right to the exclusive possession of the joint property. The fact, that in Burma all the male population pass through the phongyee kioungs or monasteries, and must for a certain time don the yellow robe and become monks, and also that an immense number of men remain monks and lead celibate lives, has led to women taking a very active part in business, and hence has arisen the idea of an equal partnership in marriage. If, however, the wife is not engaged in business, it is acknowledged that she fulfils her part in the partnership by bearing the

children and attending to the domestic comfort, and she still retains her control over the joint property.

Divorce is obtained with facility. Buddhist law recognises the fallibility of man, and the fact that in marriage, as in everything else, he may act in error, and should therefore have the opportunity given of retrieving his mistake. To obtain divorce in Burma, it is simply necessary for the parties to agree together that their marriage or partnership should be dissolved. The marriage is thereupon annulled; each takes their separate property; they divide the joint property equally; the husband takes the male children and the wife the female. There is no scandal, and no opprobrium is incurred. Should only one party insist on separation, and there is no fault on the other side, the party who does not wish to separate retains the joint property. Marriage cannot, however, be put an end to simply at the caprice of one of the parties. Polygamy is allowed by the Buddhist law, though the practice is regarded with disfavour by the Burmese people. The taking of a lesser wife is not of itself considered a sufficient cause of divorce by the first wife. Desertion is a valid reason; if a husband leaves his wife for three years and does not maintain her, or a wife her husband for one year because she has no affection for him, then "they shall not claim each other as husband and wife; let them have the right to separate and marry again."

Exceptions are made in the case where the husband absents himself to trade, to fight, or to study, in which cases the wife has to wait eight, seven, or six years respectively before she can marry again. If a married man enters a monastery, the marriage is dissolved. Constant ill-treatment on the part of a husband is sufficient cause for divorce, but not petty quarrels. A husband may put away his wife or take another if she has no children or has only female children; if she has leprosy or disease, if her conduct is bad, and if she has no love for her

husband. If a husband is a drunkard, gambler, or better, or is immoral, and has three times in the presence of good men made a written engagement to reform and yet continues these evil practices, his wife may put him away. If the divorce is due to the fault of one party, he or she is not entitled to any share in the joint property. The partition of the property is the actual test of divorce, for according to the Dhamma, "If a husband and wife have separated and no division of property has taken place, neither shall be free to live with another man or woman. But if the property has been divided they may do so. Thus Manu has decided." In every case the husband takes the male children and the woman the female.

Marriages so easily made and so easily broken must inevitably lead to a certain looseness as regards the marriage tie; but there are several points of view in the Buddhist law which may be commended to Western peoples, namely, the equal status of women in marriage, the equal control and partition of the joint property, the division of the children of the marriage among the parents, and also the possibility of obtaining divorce without public scandal. As a matter of fact, marriages are happy in Burma, as a rule, and, whatever may be said to the contrary, illegitimate children are rare, except as the Eurasian offspring of Christian fathers, whose example is bitterly deplored by those who desire to see the Burmans take a higher standard.

Babies are well taken care of, and many are the pretty lullabies composed to lull them to sleep—a few verses from one of which, translated by Shway Yoe, I am tempted to give:—

"Sweet, my babe, your father's coming,
Rest and hear the songs I'm humming;
He will come and gently tend you,
Rock your cot and safe defend you;

Mother's setting out his dinner—
Oh, you naughty little sinner!
What a yell from such a wee thing,
Couldn't be worse if you were teething!
My sweet round mass of gold,
Now pray do what you're told.
Be quiet and good,
As nice boys should.
Oh, now please,
Do not tease,
Do be good,
As babies should,
Just one tiny little while;
Try to sleep, or try to smile.
My prince, my sweet gold blood, my son,
Ordained a regal race to run,
Listen to your mother's coaxing,
Listen to the song good folks sing.
When little boys
Make such a noise,
Comes the brownie
On wings downie,
Comes the wood-sprite
In the night dark,
Witch and warlock,
Mere and tor-folk,
Kelpie, nikker,
Quick and quicker
Gobble all bad babies up."

From this lullaby we see that mothers talk to their babies in much the same way all the world over.

In spite of the fact that Burma is now British, that railways are beginning to pierce the land in every direction, that education will create new wants, and contact with the West, restlessness and a love of enterprise, long may the Burmese woman remain as happy and as contented as she now is.

CHAPTER XIII

THE CEREMONIES OF BORING THE EARS AND TATTOOING THE LEGS—OF MARRIAGE AND BURIAL

UP to the age of ten the costume of a Burmese child consists at most of a piece of silk or cotton bound round the hips and falling to the knees, but the vast majority of the children of the people are absolutely naked and not ashamed; for not even the infantile costume of a string and a rupee, which passes muster in Bengal, is thought necessary in Burma. When a girl reaches, however, the age of twelve or thirteen, she passes from childhood to young womanhood, and the crossing of the Rubicon is marked by a ceremony of vital importance, and which is in no case ever omitted—namely, that of the boring of the ears.

On a certain day, selected by the astrologers as peculiarly lucky, all the friends and relatives of the family are invited, and musicians are engaged. The little maid, dressed in her best, awaits the great event with trepidation and anticipation, for will not the stab of the boring needle free her from the thraldom of childhood, and open to her the gay pleasures of maidenhood, and the privileges of flirtation, leading in the end to the consummation of marriage? At a given moment the professional ear-borer plunges sharp needles of gold through the lobes of her ears, and the loud music of the band drowns the cries of the little girl.

The process of enlarging the aperture is then begun, and has to be continued every day till the hole is large enough to admit an ear-tube half or even three-quarters of an inch

in diameter. Bundles of delicate stems of elephant-grass are passed into the opening, the number of which is increased every day, till a large and unsightly hole is produced in the dilated lobes of the ears. This is then filled either by tubes of glass of different colours, or by short circular pieces of silver with filigree ornamentation, or even by long rods of silver of considerable weight. I bought out of the ears of a Kachin woman, within sight of King Theebaw's throne, a pair of massive silver ear-tubes curiously worked. Royal ladies and ladies of the court used to have the sole right of wearing ear-tubes of gold set with jewels. Amber plugs are so highly valued that I would not pay the price asked for them in the bazaar at Mandalay. Ear-tubes of every conceivable colour and pattern, made of German glass, are exposed for sale in every bazaar, and the choice of a dainty ear-tube is a matter on which much care is expended by the Burmese coquette. The hole in the ear is sometimes so big that a large green cheroot can be easily carried in it, and I have been amused when travelling by rail to see a woman deposit her railway ticket for safety in the gaping space.

In the same way as boring the ears marks the age of puberty in a girl, so tattooing the legs is the sign in a boy that he is growing into manhood. When watching the coolies engaged in lading and unlading the boats on the Irrawaddy, one cannot fail to observe that every man seems to wear dark blue tights from the waist to the knee. These breeches are not, however, external, but are in the skin itself, and are the result of careful and skilful tattooing. On close inspection, it is found that all kinds of animals, but chiefly tigers, monkeys, and elephants, as well as beloos or devils, are cleverly tattooed on the skin in red and blue, each figure being encircled by a border of letters and words. A Burman would think it unmanly not to have his thighs tattooed, and the custom is universal. The operation is a painful one, so that only a

little is done at a time, and during the process the boy is usually kept under the influence of an opiate.

TATTOOED LEGS.

The Shans are the best tattooers, but none of the Burmese are equal to the Japanese in the realisation of the artistic possibilities of the art. In Burma the reds usually fade out, while the dark blue dyes remain; but in Japan the figure of a dragon, or of a woman dressed in a flowery kimono, will be tattooed on the skin in delicate shades of blue and red, and will remain indelible and unchanged throughout the whole of the person's life. The Burmese tattooers are now learning to decorate the limbs of English sailors with pictures from the *Graphic* and the illustrated papers.

Marriage, though highly estimated among the Burmese, is not consecrated by a religious ceremony. The phongyees, or monks, accept celibacy with such earnestness of conviction, as being the highest state of mankind, that they cannot be expected to give their blessing on an occasion when happiness is sought by taking a step diametrically opposed to their views of life and its obligations. As there

are no priests in Burma, the wedding ceremony is consequently purely secular.

A marriage having been arranged between a girl and her lover, the friends of the engaged couple are, on an auspicious day, bidden by the bride's parents to a great feast. The house is thronged with guests, all dressed in their gayest tameins and pasohs. Musicians and dancers are engaged, and a booth is erected where a pwé, or play, is given representing some love-story of a king's son. In the presence of the assembled guests, the bride and bridegroom eat out of the same dish; the bridegroom then presents his bride with a packet of pickled tea, which gift is returned. This constitutes the ceremony of marriage. The publicity of the avowed intention of the young people to marry, and the public giving of the girl to the man by her parents, are considered sufficient to tie the connubial knot as firmly as the Burmans think in all reason it should be tied. The bride is, as a rule, about seventeen or eighteen years of age, and the bridegroom the same age, or a little older. The young husband is generally taken to live with his wife's parents, where he has to contribute his share to the household work and expenses. It is he also who is expected to provide the marriage dower, not the bride or the bride's father.

In fact, Burma is perhaps the only country where it is recognised that a woman honours a man by marrying him, for the laws of Manu (said to have been composed 1280 B.C.) are still the laws of Burma, and there it is especially stated that "women are to be esteemed and honoured by their fathers, brothers, husbands, and fathers-in-law, if the latter wish to be happy themselves. The gods rejoice when women are honoured; where it is not done, sacrifices avail nothing. When the women are ill-treated the family goes to ruin; when the contrary happens, it flourishes for ever." A Burmese bride enters the married state certain of kind consideration

and good treatment; if her experience is otherwise, the law gives her quick and sure redress.

There is an ancient tradition in Burma that when the earth was originally peopled from the heavens, nine of the spiritual beings gradually became human owing to their having partaken of gross food. Four became women and five men. Four of the men then took the four women to wife, but one man was left out in this pairing of couples, and was perforce a lonely bachelor. Enraged at the happiness of the married couples, he pelted them with stones on their marriage night. In sympathy with this primeval bachelor, and following immemorial custom, the young men of the neighbourhood collect after a wedding, and all through the night throw stones and pieces of wood on the roof of the house which shelters the happy couple; a custom which is so disagreeable and annoying, that in Lower Burma the bridegroom is fain to bribe his troublesome neighbours to forego a ceremony "more to be honoured in the breach than in the observance."

The Burman thoroughly enjoys a funeral. It would seem indeed to be sometimes a matter of regret that he cannot be there to participate in his own obsequies, for a poor man when dead will receive more gifts than he ever had when alive, and money, which would have kept him for a long time living in comfort, is squandered on his corpse. Burmans both bury and cremate their dead, and in each case the ceremonies are long, and are most punctiliously observed.

As soon as the person is dead, the body is washed, wrapped in a new white cloth, and dressed in the richest clothing the deceased possessed. The face is left uncovered, and between the teeth is put the coin of gold or silver which is supposed to pay for the passage across the river of death. Messages are then sent to the monastery and the musicians are summoned. The music selected on these occasions is mournful, and dirges are played outside the house without ceasing.

The body is then placed in a wooden coffin of very flimsy construction; in the case of nobles, the coffins are gilded. Relatives and friends arrive at the house in great numbers as soon as it is known that a death has occurred, and they bring with them gifts or money. At the end of two, or at the most three days, the body is borne to the grave with great pomp and ceremonial. The coffin, which is painted red, is carried by eight persons, friends of the deceased, under a large canopy, gaily decorated with tinsel and paintings. Over the coffin is thrown the richest clothes which had been worn by the dead person. In the procession the alms intended for the monks are carried first, followed by nuns bearing baskets of betel and pickled tea. The monks come next, walking two and two, and carrying broad-leafed fans in their hands; after them walks the band of singers. The bier follows, and then a great crowd of relatives and friends, all dressed in white, making loud lamentations, and calling upon the dead to answer numerous questions.[1] At the cemetery the coffin is placed on the ground, and the senior monk delivers a sermon, which is simply a recitation of the great commandments and precepts of Buddha, after which the monks retire. The chief mourner then pours water slowly out of a cocoa-nut shell, saying, "May the deceased and all present share the merit of the offering made and the ceremonies now proceeding." The coffin is swung three times backwards and forwards over the open grave and lowered. Every visitor throws in a handful of earth and the grave-diggers fill up the grave. The alms and gifts are then distributed to the monks and the poor. No headstone marks the grave.

When the body is burnt, the pyre is kindled by the nearest relatives. Three days later the relations, dressed in white, return to search for and collect the bones that remain. These

[1] I have seen a similar Chinese funeral procession in the streets of Hong-Kong.

are carefully washed in cocoa-nut milk and placed in an earthenware pot, which is either kept in the house or buried. Sometimes a solid pagoda is raised over the bones of a great person as a monument; at others they are ground to powder, mixed with wood oil, and moulded into a little figure of Buddha, which is taken home and treasured in a sacred spot in the house.

For a week after the funeral a kind of Irish wake goes on. A great concourse of friends are incessantly coming to the house of mourning day and night, and are engaged in talking, eating, and drinking. Friends contribute towards the heavy expense of a funeral, but it often results, nevertheless, that the whole fortune left by the deceased is squandered on his obsequies.

When carrying a dead body, the procession must not move to the north or to the east; hence Burmese cemeteries are placed to the west of a city outside the gates. All bodies are carried out of the west gate, which is therefore called the gate of mourning.

In proof of the antiquity of the ceremonies of the Burmese and the conservatism of the people, we find that funerals are described by the travellers of the sixteenth century as taking place then exactly as they do now. Ralph Fitch, writing of Pegu in 1583, says: "And if any die, hee is carried upon a great frame made like a Tower, with a covering all gilded with gold, made of canes, carried with fourteene or sixteene men, with Drums and Pipes and other instruments playing before him to a place out of the Towne, and there is burned. He is accompanied with all his friends and neighbours, all men; and they give to the Tallapois or Priests many mats and cloth; and then they return to the house, and there make a Feast for two days; and then the wife, with all the neighbours' wives and her friends, goe to the place where he was burned, and there they sit a certaine time and cry, and gather the pieces

of bone which bee left unburned and burie, and then return to their houses and make an end of all mourning. And the men and women which bee neare of kin doe shave their heads, which they do not use except it be for the death of a friend; for they much esteeme of their haire." [1]

[1] "Purchas' Pilgrims," vol. ii. p. 174.

CHAPTER XIV

MUSIC, DANCING, AND ACTING

THE Burmese are passionately devoted to plays, and so keen is their love of dramatic representation of romantic incidents in the lives of kings, queens, and fairies, that their enjoyment is not spoilt by the lack of a theatre, nor their realisation of the story hindered by the total absence of stage scenery. A people, to whom evil and good spirits, fairies and hobgoblins, are tangible personages in their daily lives, have sufficiently vivid imaginations to enjoy stage-plays without the scenic accessories which aid the sluggish fancy of the more phlegmatic European.

Consequently the giving of a play or pwé is the easiest thing in the world in Burma. If a man has had a stroke of good luck, has sold his paddy harvest well, if a son has been born to him, or his daughter is married, he determines, as a matter of course, to summon his friends and neighbours to rejoice with him, and he gives a pwé.

On some open space (permission having been got from the police) a large booth is rapidly run up with bamboo poles supporting a lightly thatched roof. Bright-coloured hangings take the place of walls, and the footlights are improvised from earthenware bowls filled with petroleum. A branch or a tree in the centre of the stage is the only attempt at scenery, a box or chest does duty as a throne, the masks of the beloos or ogres, and the wings of the dragons are hung on a bamboo stand beside the stage, and are openly donned by the actors as circumstances require, without any attempt at illusion.

The bare ground forms the pit of the theatre, and a few raised bamboo stands supply the boxes for distinguished guests. The members of the orchestra sit in front of the stage. No

A COURT PRIMA DONNA.

entrance fee is charged, as the play is freely given by some person who wishes to share his happiness or good fortune with his neighbours.

Early in the afternoon the people bring their mats, so as

to secure good places, and by nightfall the open space is densely crowded with an audience who stay squatting on their heels all through the night, intensely interested in the plot, and hugely amused by the "quips and cranks" of the clown or stage "fool." If anybody in the audience should grow weary, he simply curls himself up on his mat, takes a refreshing nap, and awakes to pick up the thread of the long-drawn-out romance with unabated interest.

There is great similarity in the plots. They generally present the adventures of a gallant prince, who, wandering from home, falls in love with a fairy or a damsel in distress. Heroic sentiments are greatly appreciated, and jokes still more so. In the train of the prince is always a follower whose raillery of the maids-of-honour, improvised sallies, and satirical remarks on persons and events of local interest, provoke shouts of laughter. Court processions, receptions, and dances form a great part of the play, and the dialogue is generally chanted.

The dancing is highly characteristic. The short skirts, scanty clothing, and the flinging about of the legs considered correct and elegant in our ballets, are looked upon in Burma as indecent and improper beyond measure; in fact, to prevent the narrow tamein from falling open while a girl is dancing and thus showing her bare legs, the edges of the garment are carefully sewn together, so that the dancer has her lower limbs enclosed in a kind of narrow sack, which scarcely allows of walking. Burmese dramatic dancing is not specially concerned with the movements of the legs; it consists of rhythmic swaying motions of every part of the flexible body in harmony with the music, the whole group of dancers moving in perfect unison. Thus a Burmese girl dances to her very finger-tips while standing on the same spot.

The extraordinary flexibility of the limbs and joints which will enable a dancer to turn her forearm outwards at the elbow, and bend her head backwards till she can pick up coins from

the ground with her lips, is the result of long training, and the rhythmic unison of movement attained by a troupe is reached only after patient drilling under a master. The sexes are always separated in the troupes. The women-dancers are brilliantly dressed in damask tameins, woven in silk and silver thread, and with white cotton jackets, winged like those of the traditional fairies, and embroidered with spangles. The King's dancers used to be gorgeously dressed, with gilded crowns on their heads and wings on their legs. The complicated evolutions of the brilliantly dressed and well-drilled figures, rhythmically contorting their pliant bodies to the sound of the noisy though harmonic music, produce a *coup d'œil* which is not easily forgotten by a stranger.

A DANCER.

The dancing of the men is much more animated. The troupe is generally composed of a band of the young men of a village, who voluntarily submit themselves to training in order to do honour to some great man or visitor, or to give a pwé on the occasion of some village fête. The simultaneous movements of the dancers are synchronous with, and illustrative of, the events described in a long dramatic poem, which is sung in chorus by the dancers.

Religious dancing is much more active and spontaneous

than the gyrations at a pwé. The dancing of the youths who accompany offerings to the pagodas on the great fête days, or the more solemn dancing at a funeral, consists of steps and movements suggested by the music. The dancer trusts entirely to the inspiration of the moment, and if he should become excited, his capers may become exceedingly vigorous and grotesque.

To enable English readers to realise to some extent the scheme of a Burmese drama, I give a short résumé of the play called "The Silver King," which was charmingly translated by the late Colonel Sladen and by Captain Sparkes. The scene opens in a hall in the king's palace, where the prince, his eldest son, lies asleep on a diamond couch. The king consults his courtiers as to the advisability of at once creating his son heir-apparent to the throne. They consent to do so, but the prince is in love with a fairy, and bemoans his fate in these words:—

"Vain is my princely birth,
My high estate. With sorrow's weight oppressed,
Nor pomp nor power can calm my tortured breast.
See, at yon lattice, 'midst her shining train
Of beauteous handmaidens, my beloved stands.
Ah me! I do but dream;—the vision melts
Away, and mocks my waking loneliness."

The scene now changes to the forest, where the hunter Mozalinda comes across the Lotus Lake, on the border of which he lies down to sleep. The seven daughters of the king of the fairies petition their father to let them go to earth to bathe in the Lotus Lake, and they say—

"We crave permission to descend to earth,
To enjoy our pastime 'midst the shady bowers
That fringe the Lotus Lake, and, when fatigued,
Our glowing bodies in its waves to cool."

The king replies:—

"Go, if it please you, but, my daughters dear,
Remember that the world where mortals dwell
Is not, like ours, exempt from accident.
Be careful, then; that bright intelligence
Which to our highly gifted race belongs
Exert, I charge you; well each action weigh,
And with all speed to this your home return."

The seven fairies repair to the Lotus Lake and disport their lovely forms "amidst the crystal waves." Mozalinda awakes and sees the enrapturing sight, and repairs to a hermit close by to get a magic noose, and snare one of the fairies for the delectation of his prince. Dwaymenau is ensnared in the magic noose, and cries to her sisters for help; but the hunter comforts her with the assurance that her capture "is the sure reward of works of merit in a former state," and that her destiny is to be the bride of the prince. She is conveyed to the royal palace, and on seeing her the prince shows his delight in language which recalls the raptures of a Romeo:—

"More beautiful than gold
Wrought into fairest forms by artist hands;
Pure as the lily or the morning dew;
Soft is her cheek as down on insect's wing;
Her mouth breathes incense, and her flowing hair,
Is dark as night. How musical her voice!
How graceful every movement! She indeed,
And she alone, is meet my queen to be."

The fairy begs to be allowed to return to her father's home, but she is finally overcome by the prince's love, which she returns, and so marries him. She is about to become a mother, when the king calls upon the prince to lead an

army across the frontier. The fairy-wife implores him to remain with her:—

"Pity, my lord! you surely must forget
That I no mortal, but a fairy am.
If you forsake me, whither shall I turn
For comfort or support?"

But the prince replies, "Stern duty calls me hence," and bids her "daily offer love, prayers, and libations to our God for me." The prince goes to the wars, and the princess bears a son, which news is carried to him at the camp. Meanwhile the king has an ugly dream, and calls upon the court soothsayer to interpret it. He says it portends great evil to the state, and the only way to prevent disaster is to make a great hecatomb of fowls, goats, and swine on the altar of Yeenat, and that on this pile the fairy princess must be laid and sacrificed. The bad news is conveyed by the ministers to the princess, who bursts into a lament of much poetic beauty. Folding her infant in her arms she cries:—

"Sweet innocent, cling closer to my breast,
And, ere we part for ever, draw once more
From nature's fount the bland maternal stream.
How can I leave thee, and thy father dear?
As when fierce flames in one vast blaze unite,
So burns my anguish. O ye Powers that be,
Why have ye thus against me all conspired?
Must I, who love them both so fondly, leave
My babe, more beauteous than the pearls I wear,
And my dear lord, without one fond adieu,
Abandoning, return to whence I came?
Cry not, my darling! ere I quit your side,
From this full bosom I will draw a cup
Of mother's milk, and leave it, sweet! for thee."

The only way to escape the cruel death is to become again a fairy, so the ill-fated princess decides:—

"My fairy robes once more I must resume,
Then, spreading my long-idle pinions, soar
High up, amidst the rainbow-tinted clouds,
Which, by the gentle Zephyr drawn aside,
Shall, like a curtain, part to let me through."

She flies away, but before returning to fairy-land she repairs to the hermit's cave, and entrusts to him an emerald ring and an enchanted drug, by means of which her husband will be able to pass the Beloo and the Dragon which guard the outskirts of the fairy realm. The prince returns from the wars to find his bride departed, and he determines at once to follow her to the Silver Hill, "till at last he overtakes the fairy mistress of his heart and soul."

The hermit gives him the emerald ring and enchanted drug, and with them he repairs to the Himalayan forests. The aptness of the description of the forests of the Himalayas will strike those who know them:—

"Turn where I will, the matted creepers form
A net whose meshes, round me interlaced,
All progress bar."

He finally kills the Beloo, and evading the Dragon and the two great Rocs, he arrives at the courtyard of the Palace of the Silver Hill. Seven maidens are seen drawing water from a well, and the prince prays to the Powers that the seventh maiden may be unable to draw her pitcher from the well. She cannot lift it, and she appeals to him for help. He draws up her golden pitcher, and drops into it the emerald ring. This is conveyed to the princess, and she thus knows that her husband must have arrived. She informs her father, and "the courteous youth who stood beside the well" is summoned to the king's presence. He tells his story, and how,

"Counting life as but a grain of dust
When cast into the scale against my love,"

he has followed his wife to fairy-land.

The prince has to undergo three trials to prove that his love is true; he must unbend a famous bow, "whose string uncurved sustains a ton suspended," and he must subdue a wild horse and a still wilder elephant. Having bent the bow like a reed and ridden the horse and the elephant with ease, a more difficult proof of love is exacted. The king decrees—

> "Before my daughters let a seven-fold screen
> Of silk inwrought with gems suspended be,
> And from within let each of them, in turn,
> One taper finger carefully expose.
> If he who claims the lovely Dwaymenau
> By this can single her from all the rest,
> I will admit his title to her hand."

A screen is dropped, and each of the princesses in turn puts forth a finger. As Dwaymenau puts out her finger a bee settles on it. The omen is accepted, but, lover-like, the prince exclaims—

> "Ah! the thrill I feel
> As this dear hand I touch once more, confirms
> My happy choice!"

and he leads forth his blushing wife from behind the screen.

I have ventured to give rather a lengthy account of this charming little play, as it presents a very pleasing view of the romantic and tenderly sentimental side of the Burmese mind, and also because students of folk-lore will be interested in tracing the resemblance between this and similar stories, current in the literature of widely separated peoples. Undine at once recurs to the mind even of those unversed in the fascinating study of folk-lore.

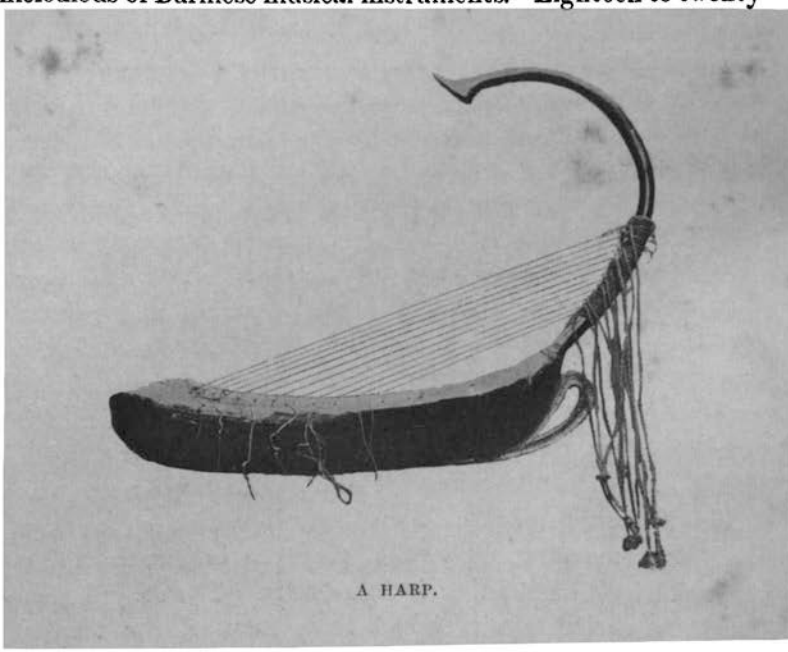
Dramas are often represented in Burma by marionettes, and, in fact, these are preferred by many, as fairies, dragons, beloos, &c., which take so large a part in Burmese plays, are more easily represented by puppets than by living persons in a theatre devoid of stage properties and mechanical contrivances.

The dialogue is given by the manager, and some of the most distinguished singers do not disdain to lend their voices to marionettes. In the puppet-plays the stage is raised; the figures are very cleverly manipulated, and I have watched a large crowd of Burmans sit for hours profoundly interested in the goings and comings of the little people.

The music of the orchestra is to English ears rather trying, though not so distracting as Chinese music, and not so exasperating as Japanese. A full orchestra is composed of the following instruments:—A seing-weing or drum-harmonicon, which consists of a frame, elaborately carved and painted, between two and three feet high and five feet across. It is hung round inside with from eighteen to twenty graduated drums, varying in size from two and a half to ten inches in diameter. The musician sits inside, and strikes the drums with his hand with considerable skill. The kyee-weing is a similar instrument, but not so high, in which a series of small gongs are arranged so that they can be struck with a knob-stick by a man sitting in the centre. The other instruments are clarionets with broad brass mouths, the tone of which is harsh and discordant, cymbals, tomtoms, beaten with the hand, castanets, made of split bamboo and often five feet long, and which are struck in the most vigorous manner by the youngest members of the band, and finally a simple form of flute. The flute-player is the leader of the orchestra. The musicians keep excellent time, but their music is full of sound and fury, fatiguing to English ears.

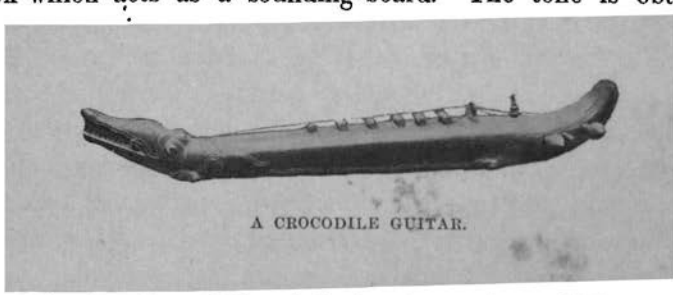
There are other instruments which make more melodious music in the hands of soloists or in the production of concerted music; these are the harp, which is held across the lap when played, the curved horn, resting against the left shoulder, the strings being touched with the right hand as the singer accompanies himself. The "crocodile" is a simple kind of guitar with three strings. The pattala, or

bamboo harmonicon, is the most original as well as the most melodious of Burmese musical instruments. Eighteen to twenty-



A HARP.

four flat pieces of bamboo, about an inch and a half broad, and graduated in length, are suspended by two cords over a curved box which acts as a sounding-board. The tone is obtained



A CROCODILE GUITAR.

by thinning the middle of the bamboo strips, which are struck with little drumsticks and emit very clear and melodious notes.

Though the Burmese are so passionately fond of music, and

though a band of musicians takes part in the celebration of every great event of life, so that it is said no Burman can be born, married, or buried without music, yet there are no teachers of music and singing in Burma, and there are also no written scores. The musician learns by listening to other players, and Burmese music is always more or less descriptive and Wagnerian in character.[1]

MUSICIANS PLAYING A HARMONICON AND A HARP.

Great singers and dancers are as much honoured in Burma as in Europe. In the King's time Moung Thah Byan was the royal favourite. He had the habit of improvising, and whenever he sang in public, his songs were eagerly taken down by reporters. It was a law of court etiquette that it was treasonable to sing a new song before the King; led away,

[1] See the interesting article on the subject by Shway Yoe in "The Burman," vol. ii. p. 9.

however, by his art, Moung Thah Byan would forget this rule, and go on improvising in the royal presence, with the result that he would be ordered out to execution. But he sang to the "spotted men,"[1] and they had not the heart to carry out the royal commands, so they hid him away for a while, and exhibited the dead body of another person. The King would then grow aweary for the great vocalist, and regret his death, when Moung Thah Byan would reappear, and, like another great singer of old, would win back the good-humour and the favour of his royal master by the charm of his music. He was honoured by having a patent granted him to carry a golden umbrella and to have lictors precede him to clear the way.

Burmese musicians are now learning to play "God save the Queen" and "Auld Lang Syne" on fiddles and piccolos, and will probably be trained in the schools by tonic-sol-fa methods, when, trusting to get their music from without, they will probably cease to listen to the voice of music and poetry within. Though all who knew Upper Burma, before and after the English occupation, declare that pwés are now much less frequent, and the people far less gay than heretofore, yet we trust that gifted improvisatori will still continue to delight open-air audiences by singing stories of the faithful love of princes and the brave deeds of good women and fairies.

[1] Executioners.

CHAPTER XV

THE CELESTIAL WHITE ELEPHANT AND OTHER ELEPHANTS

TO possess a white elephant was considered to be the crowning glory of the kings of Burma. Cæsar Frederike, speaking in 1563 of the King of Pegu, says: "He hath four elephants that be white, a thing so rare that a man shall hardly find another king that hath any such. The King, amongst all other his titles, is called 'The King of the White Elephants,' and it is reported that if the King knew any other king that had any of these white elephants and would not send them unto him, that he would hazard his whole kingdom to conquer them. He esteemeth these white elephants very deerely; they are had in great regard and kept with very meet service, every one of them in a house all gilded over, and they have their meete given them in vessels of silver and gold."

These stories of the old travellers have been discredited, but 250 years later we find the white elephant venerated in Burma as greatly as ever, and Sangermano gives a graphic account of the reception accorded to one of these deified animals while he was at Amaurapoora in 1805. Directly the elephant, which was a female, was captured, he tells how nobles were deputed to attend and watch her, and to protect her from mosquitoes by day and night; a beautiful house, such as was proper for ministers of state, was built for her use, and people flocked from all parts of the country to adore, and to offer gifts of rice, fruit, flowers, and honey.

When this Celestial White Elephant made the journey up the river, she was conveyed in a gilded barge hung with silk draperies embroidered in gold, to give protection from the sun; a great retinue of grandees formed an escort, and musicians and dancing-girls accompanied in innumerable boats. Wherever the golden barges stopped, crowds of peasants came to offer gifts. Three days before the elephant reached the capital, the King went himself with all his court to pay his respects and offer a gift of a large vase of gold.

On her arrival at Amaurapoora the whole city was *en fête* for three days. A splendid palace, gilded and decorated like that of the King, was given to the divine beast to live in; here a hundred soldiers kept guard, and five hundred servants were appointed for service and to provide the most delicate food, and every day the body of the leviathan was washed with sweet-smelling sandal-water. Cities and villages were assigned to provide a revenue for maintenance. Every utensil devoted to her use was of pure gold; a title of honour was given, and the right of using golden and white umbrellas — the jealously-guarded symbols of royalty—was granted. When the elephant walked abroad, the streets were first cleaned and sprinkled with water, and when weary she was lulled to sleep by the strains of music and the songs of dancing-girls. In the midst of all this adoration at Amaurapoora the white elephant suddenly died, killed, it is stated, by the enormous quantity of fruit and sweetmeats she had consumed. The King's grief and dismay at this misfortune were unmeasured. The body of the great animal was cremated with all the funeral honours due to a principal queen. Burnt on a pyre of sandal and sassafras wood, the bones were afterwards collected and buried in an urn, over which was raised a pyramidal mausoleum richly painted and gilded.

Orders were now given to search the forests of Pegu

and to find another celestial beast. Before long a splendid male tusker was captured, and was conveyed to the capital with all the pageantry and honour due to a semi-divine personage.

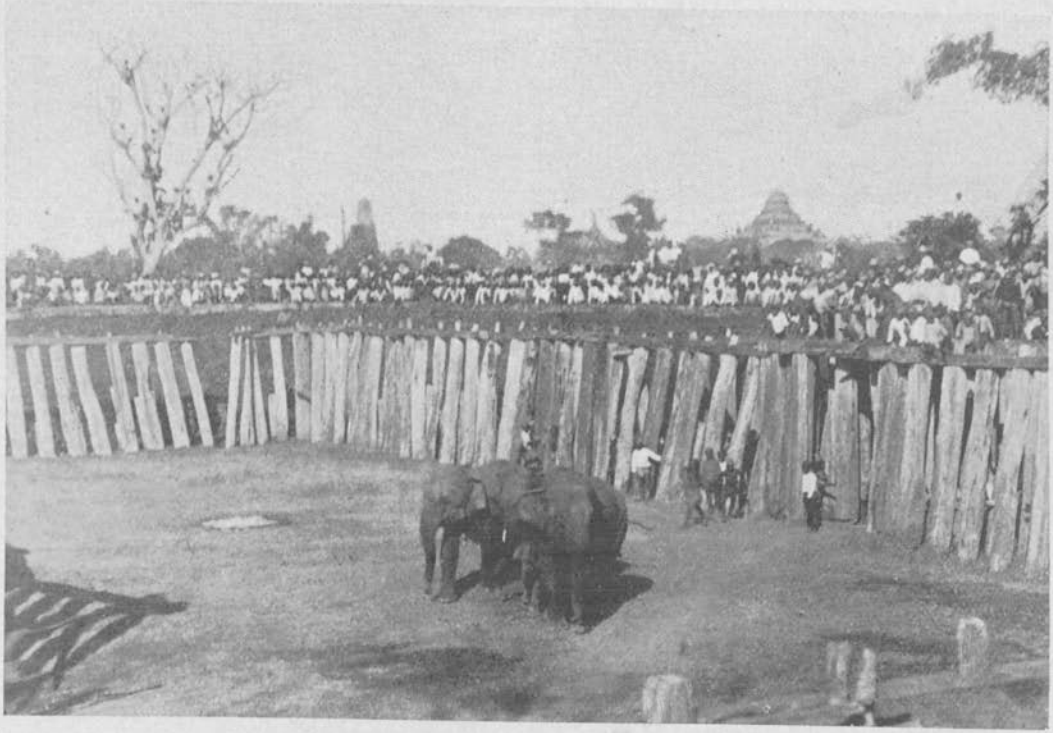
This white elephant lived in captivity over fifty years, and was seen by Colonel Yule in Ava in 1856. He speaks of him as a noble beast, but of uncertain temper. His paraphernalia and trappings are described as gorgeous. The headstall was of fine red cloth studded with rubies and diamonds; the driving hook was of crystal tipped with gold, with a stem of pearls banded with rubies; the harness was made of bands of gold and crimson set with large bosses of pure gold; a golden plate inscribed with his titles was worn on his forehead, and a gold crescent set with large gems between the eyes. A minister of state waited on him, and shoes were removed on going into his royal presence. A territory was assigned for his support. After the first Burmese war the revenue of the white elephant had to be taken to pay the war indemnity, and, to propitiate the royal beast, the King laid an address before him written on a palm leaf, begging him not to be aggrieved, and promising repayment in full. This elephant was afterwards removed to Mandalay, where the same royal honour was paid him. He fortunately died the day after Mandalay fell into the hands of the British. The honours paid to a white elephant are due to the belief that the last incarnation of Gautauma, before he was born as Buddha, was in this form.

The forests of Pegu and Tenasserim abound in wild elephants, and the catching and taming of them has always been a royal sport, and one also immensely appreciated by the people. From time immemorial it has been carried on in exactly the same way. Nicolo di Conti, Cæsar Frederike, Ralph Fitch, Sangermano, and Yule all give substantially the same account of the proceeding. A great arena is enclosed by a wall of earth about twenty-five feet high and of the

same thickness. On the inner surface of this wall is a stockade, with intervals left between the pieces of timber sufficient for a man to pass his body through. In the centre is a platform for spectators, supported by a similar stockade forming an inner wall. The entrance to the arena is through openings which are closed by the dropping down of very heavy beams.

When it is reported that there is a herd of elephants in a neighbouring forest, a troop of about twenty tame female elephants are sent out with their mahouts. A male wild elephant will most certainly be seen presently to leave the herd and attach itself to one of the females. With the most practised feminine wiles the tame elephant then beguiles her admirer to the arena, the other elephants aiding her by jostling the unwary brute to his doom. Immediately he has passed the opening, the beams are let down and he is imprisoned in the arena. The female elephants then retire, and he is left alone with the mahouts. To tire the animal out is now the object of the drivers. The mahouts prick him with goads, and when pursued by the infuriated beast they escape between the spaces of the timbers; the elephant spends his rage in hurling himself against the stockade and in trumpeting. Exhausted, he is finally driven into a small cage-like space where his legs are bound with cords and a collar is put on. Sangermano says, "Many die either with grief or from the treatment they have received," and Yule describes how the elephant which he saw entrapped died suddenly while it was being bound. In some cases the elephant is caught by means of nooses thrown round his feet, but this is dangerous to the hunters. In both methods of taming elephants fatal accidents are common.

I cannot forbear quoting the picturesque account given by the Italian traveller, Cæsar Frederike, of elephant-taming in the city of Pegu in the middle of the sixteenth century.



TAMING A WILD ELEPHANT.

After describing the construction of the arena and the crowds that collect to see the sport, he says :—

"Then the females which are taught in this business goe directly to the mouth of the darke way, and when as the wilde elephant is entred in there, the hunters shoute and make a great noise, as much as is possible, to make the wilde elephant enter in at the gate of that palace, which is then open, and as soone as he is in, the gate is shut without any noise, and so the hunters with the female elephants and the wilde one are all in the court together, and then within a small time the females withdraw themselves away one by one out of the court, leaving the wilde elephant alone: and when hee perceiveth that hee is left alone, hee is so mad that for two or three houres to see him is the greatest pleasure in the world: he weepeth, he flingeth, he runneth, he jostleth, he thrusteth under the places where the people stand to see, thinking to kill some of them, but the posts and timber is so strong and great that he cannot hurt anybody, yet he oftentimes breaketh his teeth in the grates. At length, when he is weary and hath laboured his body that he is all wet with sweat, then he plucketh in his trunke into his mouth, and then he throweth out so much water out of his belly, that he sprinkleth it over the heads of the lookers-on, to the uttermost of them, although it be very high: and then when they see him very weary, there goe certaine officers into the court with long sharpe canes in their hands, and pricke him that they make him to goe into one of the houses that are made alongst the court for the same purpose: as there are many which are made long and narrow, than when the elephant is in, hee cannot turn himselfe to goe back again. And it is requisite that these men should be very wary and swift, for although their canes be long, yet the elephant would kill them if they were not swift to save themselves. At length when they have got him into one of

those houses, they stand over him in a loft, and get ropes under his belly and about his neck, and about his legs, and bind him fast, and so let him stand foure or five days, and give him neither meate nor drinke. At the end of these foure or five days, they unloose him, and put one of the females unto him and give them meate and drinke, and in eight days he is become tame. In my judgement there is not a beast so intellective as are these elephants, nor of more understanding in all the world: for he will doe all things that his keeper sayth, so that he lacketh nothing but human speach."

Elephants were indeed credited with affection and loyalty passing those of courtiers. Gasparo Balbi tells how, when the elephant of the King of Ava was carried captive to Pegu after the noted duel on elephant-back between the two kings, he was said to mourn his master with a grief that would not be comforted. "I myself saw him lament, and that hee would care but very little; and this I saw in the lodging where the King of Pegu was wont to keepe him, where continually were two Simini, that prayed him to eate, and mourne no longer, but be merry, for he was come to serve a king greater than his own. Notwithstanding the said elephant would not cease from teares, and alwaies in token of sorrow held down his trunk, and thus he continued the space of fifteen dayes and then he began to eate, to the King's great content."

If we are to credit the same early writers, the number of elephants a king would take into battle was enormous. Ralph Fitch says that it was reported that the King had 5000 elephants of war.

In the war with the British the Burmans always fought behind stockades, and elephants were of no service in a war of defence. They were, however, used to destroy traitors within the gates of the royal city. In the days of dismay and terror which followed the death of Maha Bandula (April 1825), when the British arms were pressing steadily on towards

the capital, a former officer, the Pakan Woon, then in disgrace and in prison, was released and made commander-in-chief. He determined to at once show his power by ordering the European prisoners to be put to death; but the cruel tyrant had jealous foes, who hated to see their rival raised from the prison to power, and they accused him of secretly intriguing for the throne itself. He was arrested and his house was searched, where the insignia of royalty were discovered. Without trial and with no delay he was condemned, hurried with blows and kicks to the place of execution, and there trodden to death by elephants. Mrs. Judson says, "Perhaps no death ever produced such universal rejoicings as that of the Pakan Woon."

To act as his own mahout (or driver) was one of the King's pleasures. The great size and the gorgeous trappings of the elephants used in the processions of state in Burma were the remark of all travellers, even up to recent times. Now all the pomp of Oriental magnificence has departed, and I never saw an elephant in the streets all the time I was in Burma. Indeed, the Liliputian character of the ponies and buffaloes, which draw the cabs and carts, is what excites attention.

Of the use made of elephants in stacking timber at Rangoon and Maulmain I have already spoken.

In the great forests of Pegu elephants still roam free in large numbers, and are hunted by sportsmen who delight in pursuing big game.

CARVED FIGURES OF NATS.

CHAPTER XVI

SOME NATIONAL SUPERSTITIONS

FORTUNE-TELLING is a fine art in Burma; astrologers were honoured by the kings, and are still firmly believed in by the people. They are Brahmins whose forefathers centuries ago migrated from India, bringing with them a knowledge of the occult arts, which has been ever since handed down from father to son. Astrologers control all the affairs of life of a Burman, and a people free from priestcraft have given themselves over to the most foolish superstitions, which are not vague and half-realised hopes and fears, but real beliefs, definitely interfering with life and action at every turn. Thus nothing can be done, no wedding held, no house commenced, no journey begun, without first ascertaining from the

astrologers the lucky day. Children at school are taught doggerel rhymes embodying all sorts of strange beliefs, such as that if they were born on one day of the week it is unlucky to do anything on certain other days. It is indeed argued that the charge of idleness, so often brought against the Burman, is due in a great measure to the enormous number of unlucky days there are in his calendar, which makes it unpropitious for him to begin or to do any work at those times. These beliefs, which are very deep-rooted, are the cause of a great deal of the seemingly perverse behaviour of the Burman. One day he will work with surprising energy, for this is one of his "kingly days," and all tasks done then will bring him luck; but if you should ask any labour from him on one of his unlucky days, his stubborn dilatoriness will task your patience to the utmost, and the motive of his apparent idleness, of which you know nothing, is the—to him—convincing reason, "Everything I do to-day will bring me bad luck, why therefore work at all?"

Lucky and unlucky days are not matters of guess-work, but are arrived at by a certain definite scheme of computation. Directly a child is born, its horoscope is cast by the astrologers, and this afterwards becomes the chart by which he is guided in the affairs of life. Palmistry is of course practised, and dreams are firmly believed in. An ancient book called the "Beden" recounts the influence of the stars, and the good or ill luck which will result from being born under certain constellations; parents are therefore most anxious to know from the Brahmins, directly a child is born, what constellation presided at its birth, and this is then recorded on its horoscope. Another book, called the "Deitton," gives the most detailed directions as to the observances to be followed to ensure good luck, and describes all the omens of good or evil fortune which surround us every day of our lives.

The learned Italian priest, Sangermano, translated some

portions of the "Deitton," a few extracts of which will be interesting to the curious. Thus it is taught that the beams used in building a house are distinguished into, male, namely, those of equal thickness throughout; female, which are thicker below than above; and neuter, which are thickest in the middle. When larger at the top they are called giants. Whoever lives in a house made of male wood throughout will be happy in all places, at all times, and under all circumstances; but if the beams be neuter, continual misery will be his lot, and if they be of the giant species he will die. The knots in the wood of the stairs have also grave significance, as well as the posts which support the building; if they are square, it is a sign of sickness. Even the digging of the foundations may be found by a wise man to be the cause of the unexplained misfortunes of the owner. The knots in the wood of boats and carriages also bring good or bad fortune to their possessors, and what is met with on the road or the river is in Burma not a trifle, but a matter of deep significance.

Eclipses of the sun or moon are prognostications of great evil. In the four months in which Venus is not seen, or in any month in which an eclipse or earthquake happens, or in which the year commences, it is unlucky to marry, or to build a house, or to cut one's hair, as death by drowning or some such catastrophe will be the consequence. When a dog carries any unclean thing to the top of a house, it is a sign that the master will become rich; if a hen lay her egg upon cotton, her master will become poor. If a man who is engaged in a lawsuit meet another carrying brooms or spades, the suit will be long, and in the end he will be deceived. If the wind should blow away any of the leaves of the betel, when, according to custom, it is being carried to the house of a newly married woman, it is a sign that the marriage will be unhappy, and that there will be a separation. If, in going to war or to prosecute a lawsuit, a person meet with a fish, there

will be no war, and the lawsuit will cease; if he meet a serpent, then the affair will be long; and if he meet a dog, a female elephant, or a person playing cymbals, all will go well.[1] The cawing of crows and the baying of dogs are of course prognostications. If a wild beast is loose in a city, it foretells that the city will be made desolate. This evil omen has decided the fate of a city, and it is alleged that the escape of a tiger from the royal menageries induced King Mindohn to abandon Amaurapoora and build a new royal city at Mandalay.

As witchcraft is firmly believed in, so talismans are resorted to to protect the wearer from evil influences. Some are worn round the neck; but there is scarcely a Burman who does not bear somewhere about his body little rods or discs of silver covered with cabalistic signs, which are inserted under the skin to protect him from sword cuts and bullet wounds. On the brawny chests of the dacoits in Mandalay prison I have seen rows of these discs evident to sight and touch, making warty elevations under the skin. Various figures and devices are also tattooed on the body, and are believed to give absolute protection against snake-bite. On my husband expressing, in my presence, incredulity on this point to a Burman who had had some medical education in an English hospital, the man replied with great earnestness, "Oh, but indeed it will protect you, and if you doubt it we will tattoo you on the wrist, and next week we will bring a poisonous snake and it shall bite you, and you will see that no harm will result." It is needless to say that my husband declined to have the experiment tried. He had not the robust faith of a Burman on whose thigh a Shan tattooed the device of the paddy-bird of Pegu, which is said to give absolute protection against death by drowning. Directly the operation was over, the man, who was a fisherman, insisted upon having the charm put to the test. He induced his

[1] Sangermano's "Burmese Empire," p. 144.

friends to accompany him to his boat, and to accentuate still more the great value of the charm, he was bound hand and foot. His friends rowed into mid-stream, and at his request threw him overboard. To their great surprise and dismay he sank and was drowned.[1] When they were afterwards brought to trial on the charge of manslaughter, the serious legal defence made was that there must have been some error in the preparation of the charm, or possibly the spirit of the river had not been propitiated; thus the charm had not acted, as it certainly would have done had everything been carried out correctly.

The Burmans have an unwavering faith in love philtres and in charms, by means of which the desired love of a person can be secured. Young men, and even girls, do not hesitate to have certain drugs injected under the skin together with the vermilion dye by which small cabalistic signs are tattooed on the tip of the tongue or on the forehead, in the hope of making the faithless one true, or of exciting love and admiration.

Witches are as firmly believed in as they were two hundred years ago in Europe. Burmese witches are, however, not all wicked, and busied always in tormenting people with mysterious diseases and bad luck, for there are two kinds, the *sohn* or evilly disposed witch, who delights in working mischief, and the *wehsah* or kindly spirit, whose pleasure it is to undo the evil machinations of the *sohn*. To win the good offices of the *wehsah* and to propitiate the *sohn* is, of course, the incessant aim and endeavour of the credulous Burman.

There are in Burma, as in India, extraordinarily clever conjurors, who impose upon the people as magicians. Shway Yoe relates how he has seen a man take rolled-up pieces of gold and silver leaf and thin sheets of copper, and throw them into a bowl of water. They naturally sank, on which

[1] The Burmese Census Report of 1891, p. 270.

the magician would spread his hands over the bowl and mutter incantations, when the metals would rise to the surface, and he could make them sink, or remain suspended in the middle of the fluid, or float on the surface, according to the part of the spell recited.[1] Sometimes a person is so tormented by a witch, that, in despair, he seeks at last the protection of the English magistrate, and is much disappointed to learn that the case is beyond the jurisdiction of the court.

The ancient method of discovering a suspected witch is truly Burmese. The woman, with her hands and feet tied, was placed on a small platform supported at each end by a boat. A vessel full of filth was then emptied over her, and the boats were slowly drawn from one another so that the woman fell into the water. If she swam, she was a witch, and used to be sent, as Sangermano says, "to some place where the air is unwholesome;" if, however, she sank, this was a proof that she was innocent. To save her from drowning, "a rope of green herbs" had been previously tied round her waist, by means of which she was pulled ashore.

Trial by ordeal used to be practised by those who preferred it to trusting to the law-courts. The accuser and the defendant were tied to a bamboo and thrown into the river; the one that sank won the case, and the loser paid all costs. To preserve the even mean between sinking and swimming must have been the effort, for to sink was to win and die, and to swim was to lose and pay. Another plan was for the two disputants to repair to a lake or pond accompanied by phongyees and witnesses; after certain purificatory ceremonials, they waded into the water till it was up to the armpits.[2] Two men placed the disputants close together and put a board on their heads. At a given moment they were forced simultaneously under the water. The person who remained the longest

[1] "The Burman," by Shway Yoe, p. 127.

[2] This is described by Ralph Fitch in Burma in 1583.

immersed won the case. The justice of this decision was never doubted, and the judgment was hailed with acclamation by the bystanders. Another kind of ordeal, which used to be resorted to in order to detect a criminal, was to dip the finger of the accused, wrapped in a thin palm leaf, into melted tin. If the finger and leaf remained uninjured, the person was innocent; if the natural consequences resulted, he was guilty.

In alchemy also, as in witchcraft, we find superstitions which died hard in Europe still flourishing in Burma. In spite of the fact that Burmans discount wealth as a personal possession, and that alchemy was denounced by Gautauma Buddha and is decried by the phongyees, the discovery of the philosopher's stone is most earnestly desired. To kings, who occasionally tried to purchase the happiness of heaven by giving their weight in gold to decorate a pagoda or to make a statue of Buddha, and whose palaces were covered with gold leaf to the topmost pinnacle, it was a matter of vast importance to discover how to transmute the baser metals into the most precious; and hence among the numerous alchemists of Burma we find some of the kings themselves. When Mr. Crawfurd was at Ava, he was frequently asked if the English had not mastered the art of turning iron into silver and copper into gold. The superstition has by no means died out, and many Burmans still ruin themselves in a vain search for the philosopher's stone.

A Burman has an insuperable objection to awaken a person who is sleeping, and the reason is a poetical fancy, which has taken deep root in the national mind. A soul or spirit, such as Christians believe to exist, is no part of the Buddhist creed, but the human mind seems to long for a belief in a spiritual essence; thus the cold and passionless teachings of pure Buddhism have been supplemented by a current belief that the meditating and aspiring part

of a man—that, in fact, which we call the soul—is an essence apart, and which, personified in the form of a butterfly, can escape from the body and roam at large when he is asleep, and if he be suddenly awaked, it may not have time to return. If the butterfly spirit should in its wanderings lose its way, or meet with a hobgoblin which devours it, then it will never return to the body and its owner will die. Generally, however, it only roams to those places which are known to the person to whom it belongs, and what it sees and experiences it conveys to its sleeping partner in the form of dreams. When a man dies, the butterfly spirit flies out of his mouth at the last moment and dies too.

When two persons are very closely connected, as a mother and her new-born child, or a devoted husband and wife, and one of them dies, it may be difficult to keep one butterfly spirit from following the other. To prevent this occurring incantations of a definite kind are resorted to. The idea, which is full of fancy and a weird poetry, is to be found also among the Japanese in another form.

CHAPTER XVII

DOCTORS AND DOCTORING, BURMESE AND BRITISH

FOR a man to have leave to practise as a doctor in Burma he is not required to be learned in anatomy and physiology and in the art of medicine; all that is necessary is for him to believe that he has the gift of healing, or to assert that he has medical knowledge and skill, and a credulous public will believe him, and entrust themselves to his care when they are ill and alarmed.

Burmese medicine is based on ancient lore and not on modern discoveries. Gautauma himself enumerated the number of bones, veins, and nerves contained in the human body, and an ancient classical treatise on Burmese medicine is still the text-book of native doctors. It teaches that the body is composed of four elements—earth, water, fire, and air. Earth constitutes the flesh, bones, hair, and internal organs; water forms the blood, secretions, and fat; it is due to the element of fire that man eats and drinks; and air produces the six kinds of wind. It is the disturbance of the balance of these elements which induces illness. There are said to be ninety-six different complaints, which are caused either by the passions of the soul, the seasons of the year, or the food that has been taken. The diseases which spring from the passions have their seat in the heart, and those caused by food affect the bowels. The circulation of the blood is thought to be due to the wind in the body driving on the blood. The pulse is felt, but simultaneously in two parts of the body, as in the arm and foot, with the view of ascertaining if the pulsations

are equal; if so, the wind is supposed to be still driving on the vital fluid, and recovery is promised as long as a flicker of pulsation can be felt. The day of birth and the constellation under which the patient was born are more reliable elements in the diagnosis of the disease than the symptoms, and the state of the moon at the time when the drugs were dug up in the woods is more important in the estimation of their efficacy than their medicinal properties. Thus if two persons in a house are ill of the same disease they will be differently dosed, if they have been born under different stars.

The Burmese doctor prepares his own drugs, which consist of cathartics, anthelmintics, hot peppers, fungi from bamboo roots, borax, croton seeds, vegetable soot, and a few mineral salts. If he should be lucky enough to find a meteoric stone three days after it has fallen, he has sufficient *materia medica* to last him a lifetime, and wherewithal to make a great reputation as an ophthalmic doctor, for the scrapings of a thunderbolt are thought to be the best cure for eye diseases. Some of the pills used contain an extraordinary number of ingredients. A certain green pill, stated to be infallible in its effect, contains no less than 160 components. So long as there is life the Burmese doctor doses his patient, and will even force open the mouth of a dying man with a stick to compel him to swallow pills. Long before Graves pronounced his famous dictum, "I feed fevers," the Burmese doctor did the same, and a fever patient is crammed with food on the assumption that a man cannot die so long as he eats.

When a person is ill, he becomes much excited and alarmed, and sends, if he is rich, for several Burmese doctors. The first comer proceeds to examine his patient's horoscope and to prescribe some pill. If the sick man is not better in a quarter of an hour, he sends for another doctor, who prescribes a different and nastier medicine. If recovery is not immediate, more doctors are sent for, till the patient has been

seen and dosed by all the quacks in the neighbourhood. He may succumb to the severity of the treatment, or he may recover in spite of the treatment. The rich man, who can afford to have many doctors, has a worse chance of recovery than the poor man. In the country districts, if the disease does not yield to drugs, it is said to be due to possession by an evil spirit, or to the incantations of a witch.

Witches are believed to have the power of producing a most extraordinary disease, that is, of introducing a magical mass of flesh, bones, and sinews into the body. If, all drugs having failed, it is decided that the disease is due to the evil machinations of a Nat, the patient is submitted to a terrible ordeal, calculated to kill the stoutest malingerer. A rope is tied round his neck, and various pulls are given it to make the spirit in possession say what it is he wants. If the object is named, it is put outside the house, and is probably gone before the morning. If no reply is given, or the evil spirit is still not exorcised, the patient is beaten with a bamboo stick, red pepper is thrown into his eyes, and pins are stuck into him; his consequent shrieks and groans being supposed to be due to the evil spirit within. If the patient is not killed, and has still the perverseness to remain ill, it is determined to make the devil or natzo, with which he is possessed, dance. A middle-aged woman is dubbed the wife of the natzo, and preparations are made for a devil-dance. A shed is erected; the musicians beat their drums; the woman begins to dance, slowly and solemnly at first, then faster and faster, till she is worked up into a state of frenzy, when it is supposed that the evil spirit has passed out of the sick man into her. She is then asked what gifts are required to propitiate the natzo, and offerings of fruit, &c., are placed outside the tent for the evil spirit to take away after nightfall.[1] If the patient does

[1] Ralph Fitch the traveller describes a similar ceremony as existing in Pegu in 1583. He says, "In these countries when people bee sicke they make a vowe to offer meat unto the Divell, if they escape, and when they bee recovered they

CARVED NATS ON THE PLATFORM OF THE SHWAY DAGOHN.

not even then recover, the witch doctors declare the Nat is too strong for them, and the sick man is abandoned to his fate, a reprieve which gives him at least a chance of life. Burmans are, however, discovering that English doctors and apothecaries are more learned and successful than witch doctors, though the sway of the latter is by no means broken, especially in the country districts.

In surgical emergencies the Burmese doctor is absolutely helpless, and he does not know how to set a broken limb, nor how to stop bleeding. So completely was amputation unknown before the English came to Burma, that, when in the first Burmese war the army surgeons had occasion to amputate limbs in the case of wounded Burmans, the latter thought it was the way the English had of mutilating their prisoners. It is told how a man, seeing a comrade's leg amputated, offered his limb resignedly to the surgeon, thinking it useless to try and evade his fate. Before the annexation, the people were glad to apply to the Barnabite missionaries in cases of fracture or contusion, or when bleeding was thought necessary. Now, of course, all surgical cases are brought to the English hospitals. Owing probably to temperance in drinking and simplicity of food, the Burmans bear surgical operations extremely well, and wounds heal rapidly without inflammation.

Like the Japanese, the Burmese are good shampooers; but in Japan the operators are blind men, in Burma they are women. They are very skilful, and though technically ignorant of anatomy, they show a surprising knowledge of the general direction of the muscles and tendons. It is said that in cases of rheumatism and stiffness from fatigue, the

make a banquet with many Pipes and Drums, and other Instruments and dancing all the night, and their friends come and bring gifts, Cocos, Figges, Arricaes and other Fruits, and with great dancing and rejoicing they offer to the Divell, and say they give the Divell to eate, and drive him out. When they bee dancing and playing they will cry and hallow very loud, and in this sort they say they drive him away" (Purchas' "Pilgrims," vol. ii. p. 1740).

relief given by a professional Burmese shampooer is very great. The treatment of a woman after childbirth may well make a girl dread to become a mother. In order to get rid of the humours which are supposed to be in a woman after the birth of her baby, she is submitted to a fiery ordeal, whatever may be the heat of the weather. A large fire, enough to roast anything, is kept alight in the room, blankets are heaped on the unfortunate mother, hot bricks are placed in the bed close to her body, and she is made to drink a variety of warm decoctions. At the end of a week she is allowed to get up and take a cold bath. The treatment does not kill, but it ages a young woman.

In Burma, as in India, cholera is thought to be due to the influence of an evil spirit. When the dreaded disease appears in a village, all the inhabitants at once turn out into the streets or scramble on to the roofs, and make a deafening noise by beating drums, tom-toms, tin kettles, or by blowing horns, in order to frighten away the spirit. The noise is continued till the people are tired. Mr. Cuming, in his charming little book, "In the Shadow of the Pagoda," tells an amusing and characteristic story of how his trusted native clerk, who spoke English well, was discovered to his surprise one morning, when the whole village was filled with the noise of the cholera-scarers, sitting on the roof of his own house, beating a tin kettle with great energy. He sent for the man and asked what was the meaning of the din. The clerk made an excuse for the superstition of the people; but directly after he had left his master he was to be seen again on his own roof, engaged as vigorously as ever in frightening away the cholera spirit. As a matter of fact, English education makes but little impression on the ideas and superstitions which seem ingrained in the very nature and mind of the Burmese.

There are three things which it used to be said a Burman could not escape, namely, the tattooing of his legs, the wearing

of the phongyee's yellow robe, and the small-pox. So much was small-pox dreaded, that a hundred years ago the victims to the disease were sent to some uninhabited place, and shut up far from all assistance, in order to avoid contagion. When Arakan was conquered in 1784, some slaves, carried captive to Ava, brought the news of the protection given by inoculation, which was subsequently practised in Burma with a marked influence on the disease. Vaccination has now been introduced with English rule.

Leprosy has been from time immemorial a disease to which the Burmans are specially liable, but as there is scarcely any attempt made at aggregation, and the lepers are not prohibited from marrying, the disease is propagated. Sangermano says that lepers are almost the only beggars in the country, and this is as true now as it was one hundred years ago. In Mandalay, where there are said to be no less than 2000 lepers, two homes have been established, one by the Wesleyans, under the direction of the well-known missionary, the Rev. Mr. Winston, and the other by the Catholic Fathers. I visited both of them. There are few sights more calculated to excite sympathy for suffering humanity than a leper home, for in the present state of science, leprosy is not only a loathsome, but an incurable disease.

In both leper homes the arrangements are much the same; the men are separated from the women, and they are each lodged in large, airy bamboo sheds, built on piles, separated from one another, and standing out on the open plain. The patients are under no restraint to stay; but, whilst inmates of the homes, they are not allowed to go about the town, except by express permission. In the Wesleyan Home there were, when I visited it, sixty patients; in the Catholic, one hundred and forty. Dr. Pedley, the medical officer to the Wesleyan Home, considers leprosy incurable, contagious, and hereditary. The Fathers also believe leprosy to be both hereditary and contagious, and showed

me cases of grandmother, mother, and grandchildren, all afflicted with this dire disease. There is a chapel for Christian religious services in both homes, and the services of the Church and the singing of hymns seem to bring the poor lepers some gleams of hope and pleasure. They were gathered into the Wesleyan chapel for me to hear them sing. It was a most pitiful sight to see them squatting on the floor wrapped in blankets, for they felt cold at a temperature of 70°, holding Burmese hymn-books in their mutilated hands, and beating time with fingerless stumps, while in harsh, discordant voices they shouted Moody and Sankey's hymns with evident satisfaction. Poor creatures! Their wards were gaily decorated with pictures from the English illustrated papers, due to the thoughtful kindness of Mrs. Pridmore, an English lady, who often takes her guitar and goes to sing to the lepers. Both homes are supported by small Government and municipal grants, and by voluntary subscriptions. It costs about £5 a year to keep a leper in either of these homes, and this sum could scarcely be better spent by the charitable.

Science is fast taking the place of superstition in the treatment of disease in Burma. A large General Hospital has been established at Rangoon. It is set in the midst of a spacious garden, and here natives and Europeans are treated by English surgeons and physicians. There is also at Rangoon a small hospital for women, established by the Countess of Dufferin Fund, where Karen, Burmese, and Talaing women are trained as nurses and midwives, with the object of sending them out into the jungle villages to afford skilled assistance to their sisters in time of need. At Mandalay there is a charming hospital under the care of Dr. Dantra. The army medical officers, in the cantonments throughout the country, are practically enforcing the teachings of sanitation, and slowly Burmans and Karens are learning the nineteenth-century lesson, that science maketh alive while superstition killeth.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE CRIME OF FISHING AND THE CEREMONY OF PROPITIATION

NOT to take the life of any living creature is a central doctrine of Buddhism. Thus we find that a strainer is included among the few necessary utensils of the phongyee, and he uses it to filter his drinking-water, so that he may not inadvertently swallow small animalculæ. Rice is the staple article of diet of the Burmese, and butcher's meat is unknown among them.

In Rangoon, which has always been populated with a motley crowd of men of all races and religions, poultry, pork, and venison have been sold as a concession to unbelievers. When the members of the various Missions to Ava were staying in the royal cities, the provision of meat for the English officials became a difficulty, and various stories are told of how, with the connivance of the Burmans, mutton and beef were obtained for their table. An English visitor was specially told by a minister to shoot a cow "by accident" if he met one in the street, and to afterwards make compensation to the owner. To kill wild animals is, however, permissible, while all travellers have accused the Burmans of eating, when they have the opportunity, such noisome things as snakes, serpents, and rats, as well as the flesh of animals which have died from disease. Fried silk-worms and a special kind of fat maggot, served hot on toast, are considered great dainties; but the delicacy for which the Burmans have a veritable passion is the salted preparation of fish called *ngapee*. With a supply of rice and

ngapee a Burman is happy, but without his ngapee life is scarcely worth living.

The Catholic Fathers told me at the Leper Home at Mandalay, that, wishing to put the theory experimentally to the test that eating fish in a decomposed condition is a cause of leprosy, they tried to induce some of the lepers to forego ngapee, holding out to them the hope that they might thereby recover from their leprosy; but after a month or so of this deprivation the desire to taste ngapee again was greater than the hope of being cured, and the lepers invariably returned to their usual diet.

A young English official, who had more zeal than discretion, once almost created a riot by forbidding the manufacture of ngapee in Yandoon during an epidemic of cholera. He was convinced, regardless of the teachings of bacteriology, that the evil odours of the ngapee manufactory caused or increased cholera. The unpopular order was reversed and the officer removed, when the Burmese, arguing *post hoc propter hoc*, asserted that the cholera departed when the making of ngapee was resumed. The boats that carry the fish paste, and the villages where it is prepared, are tabooed by Europeans, to whom the memory of the pleasures of taste will not excuse offences to the sense of smell, and there is scarcely anything for which the Burmans are more roundly abused than for their devotion to their national and malodorous dish.

There are three varieties of ngapee.[1] That which is most valued is made generally from a fish called ngo-koo, about eighteen inches long, which is found in muddy ponds, and from the nga-gyee or scorpion-fish. The fish are thrown into a mortar, scaled by a hard brush, rubbed with salt, and tightly packed in a bamboo basket. The following day each fish is taken out separately, carefully rubbed with salt, and laid in

[1] See "The Burman," by Shway Yoe, vol. i. p. 338.

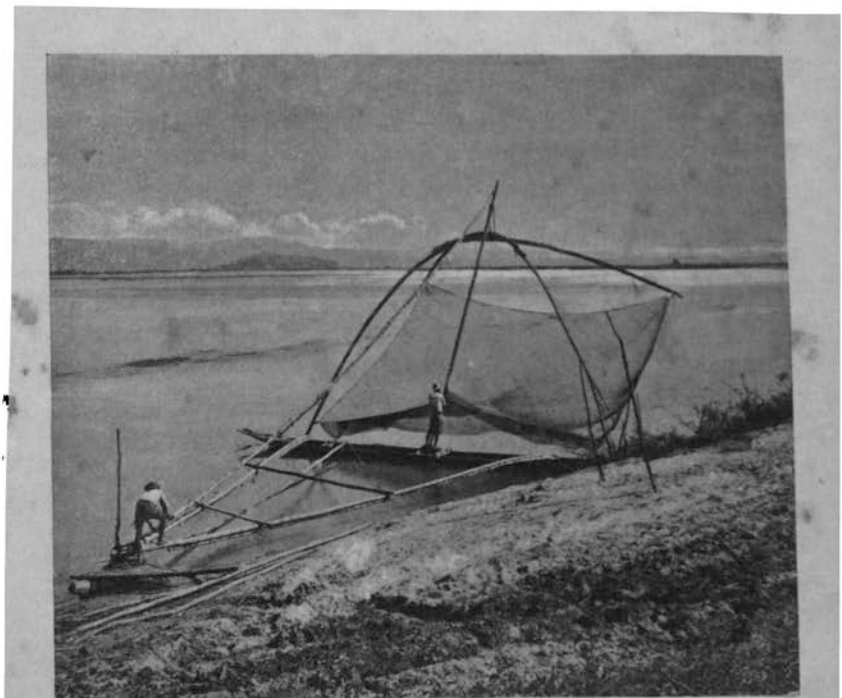
the sun to dry. They are then packed in large earthenware jars and stored in a cool place. In a month the ngapee is ready for use. It is eaten roasted or fried, in the same way as "Bombay ducks"; and it is also used for a curry. Another variety of ngapee is made from the hilsa, or Indian salmon. The most popular form is, however, not made of large or costly fish, but of shrimps and all kinds of small fry caught in a bamboo trap, and spread out in the sun to dry without the addition of salt to stay putrefaction. At the end of three days the lively mass is thrown into a mortar and pounded with plenty of salt. It is then heaped under a shed, and the superabundant liquid drained off by inserting hollow bamboos with holes in their sides. The malodorous and highly flavoured paste is packed in jars and sent all over the country.

In evidence of the ingratitude of mankind, the fisherman is threatened with the most terrible punishment for risking his soul in order to tickle the palates of his fellow-countrymen. The death of the fish is not, however, thought to be altogether his fault, for it is argued in extenuation of his crime that he has merely taken the fish out of the water, and if they die in consequence, it is to some extent the fault of the silly creatures themselves!

The method of river net-fishing on the Irrawaddy is very similar to that practised in Japan; but in Ozaka I have seen the fishing-boats with nets suspended from a pole by a cross-beam which was incessantly and gracefully dropped and raised as the boat sailed up and down stream, whereas in the Irrawaddy the boats are generally moored to the shore. A long narrow dug-out is lashed at one end to the bank, the other end being shot across the stream and anchored. A long bamboo pole is attached to the boat by a stake or ring at one end, from the other is suspended the bamboos which give support to the four corners of the square net. When desired, the net

is dropped into the water and raised again by a simple see-saw movement of the long pole.

To make compensation for the daily sacrifice of animal life, in order to satisfy their craving for ngapee, the Burmese have the custom of going forth on a certain day, when the



NET FISHING IN THE RIVER.

summer sun is beginning to dry up the pools and lakes made by the great rivers in flood-time, to rescue the fish from the death which surely awaits them if left to be baked in the fast-drying mud. The occasion is one for much mirth and fun. All the inhabitants of a town or village, old and young, and every one bearing large earthenware jars in their hands, make

their way to the muddy pools. Sometimes processions are formed, headed by dancers and the inevitable big drum in a cart. The fish are captured after much laughing and are deposited in the jars. The party then return, and the same day, or perhaps not for several days afterwards, the captured fishes, often in a moribund condition, are returned to their natural element in the river. "Why do you put the fish back into the river?" asked an English captain of a Burmese girl seen in the act. "Because," she replied, with wide-eyed seriousness, "it might be my brother." The absolute conviction of the fact of repeated existences in some other animal or human form enters into the minds, the customs, the legends, the dramas, and the poetry of the Burmese at every turn; and there is probably no rule of life taught by the great Gautauma which is more religiously observed than the command not to take life. It is at the same time one of the inexplicable mysteries and contradictions of Burma that the same people who will respect the life of an insect did not hesitate to exterminate their enemies with a thoroughness seldom seen in warfare, and against them are charged the cruelties of the dacoits, and the holocausts of victims sacrificed by their kings.

CHAPTER XIX

THE WATER-FEAST, THE CARNIVAL AT THE END OF LENT, AND OTHER FESTIVALS

RELIGIOUS feasts are in Burma, as elsewhere, occasions for meetings and merriment. The New Year's festival is perhaps the maddest, merriest of them all. On or about the night of the 11th of April the Burmese New Year commences, the exact date being fixed by the astrologers, who, after studying the constellations, are able to say when the king of the Dewahs will descend to make his annual visit to the realms of earth. A cannon is fired off at the auspicious moment, and then the "Water-Feast," as it is called by the English, commences. Directly the booming of the cannon is heard—the sound of which is awaited with the same expectation as the ringing of the church bells on New Year's night in England—everybody comes out of their houses bearing jars of water in their hands. After the recitation of a prayer, the water is poured out on to the ground.

The first duty, as soon as it is daylight on the next morning, is to repair to the monasteries, and present jars of fresh clean water to the Yahans, and beg pardon for sins of thought, word, or deed which may have been committed during the past year. Indeed, the whole festival seems to have had its origin in some ancient religious ceremony of purification. The pious then go up to the pagodas, and reverently pour water out of silver cups over the brazen statues of Buddha, and pray for a plentiful harvest. These holy duties done, the "Water-Feast" commences, and for

three days it is considered complimentary to douse everybody one meets with cold water. The houses are decorated with leaves and flowers, and from the raised balconies the inhabitants pour cold water on the passers-by, just as *confetti* are showered from windows and balconies during the Carnival at Rome. Young girls go out in small companies, each carrying a silver cup or jar, which is, with shouts of laughter, dashed over any young man they may chance to meet.

"I will do homage to you with cold water," is the greeting with which a junior will meet his senior, followed immediately by a douche of cold water, given with all respect, and as a compliment which it would be considered the height of bad manners to resent. In fact, it is a mark of unpopularity not to have at least one wetting on New Year's morning, and a sure prognostication of ill-luck. Many amusing stories are told of the amazement and indignation of some new-comer from Europe at being thus unceremoniously baptized, and being, moreover, called upon to enjoy the wetting. After two days of this strange fooling a cannon is again fired, to announce the fact that the king of the Dewahs has returned to heaven. Everybody then resumes his ordinary avocations and walks about in dry clothes.

The Buddhist Lent commences after the full moon in July, and lasts to the full moon in October—all through the rainy season, in fact. During this long time there are no marriages, no feasts, no public amusements, and even no pwés. Numbers of young men retire into the monasteries, youths undergo their noviciate, and the senior Yahans are invited by the devout and well-to-do to give addresses at their houses on the vanity of wealth and the beauty of wisdom and truth.

Dull life, rain, and floods are endured as best they can be, for with the drying of the land comes the end of Lent, and the great festivals of October and November. Then the light-hearted Burmans seem to go wild with excitement; the

streets and pagodas are illuminated, pwés are given all through the night, feasting and paying rounds of visits are the occupations of everybody, and music, dancing, and processions enliven the dusty roads without ceasing.

In Mandalay, in the olden days, all the umbrella-bearing chiefs, the Shan princes, and mountain chieftains gathered to do homage to the King, and a great "kadaw," or beg-pardon reception, was held at the palace; pwés were given by royal command at each of the four gates of the stockade, and the universal illumination of the streets and pagodas turned the grey city into a blaze of light. Gifts of honey were presented to the monks, and maidens sat up all night to weave the yellow robes worn by the ascetics. In memory of the haste with which Maya, the mother of Gautauma, had a monk's habit woven for her son, when she perceived from her abode in heaven that he had fled from his palace to the desert and had divested himself of his royal robes, the cloth must be woven in a single night. Each piece must measure fifteen feet long by one and a half broad. The thread is got ready the day before, and on the evening of the festival the women set diligently to work on the household loom. By the aid of relays of workers the cloth is woven by the morning. All through the long night the women are encouraged by the gossip of friends, and the girls stimulated by the attentions of their sweethearts. The robes are then presented to the phongyees, and the occasion is made one of rejoicing.

Lanterns are hung round the pagodas from base to pinnacle, and while they are converted into veritable "pyramids of fire," the broad river becomes a sea of light, for from every village and house on its banks, little lamps, composed of earthenware cups filled with oil and containing cotton wicks aflame, are attached to pieces of bamboo and set floating downstream. Fleets of myriads of these twinkling lights are to be seen floating down the Irrawaddy, from one end of the noble

GIFTS BORNE IN PROCESSION TO THE PAGODA.

stream to the other, and each worshipper, as he entrusts his little offering to the wide waters, breathes a prayer for good luck. Fire balloons and rockets are also sent up, and lanterns containing big candles, flower-bedecked spires or pya-thats, immense palm-fans, and white umbrellas are presented to the pagodas, and are carried in procession through the streets to the accompaniment of music and dancing.

The Sohn-daw-gyee feast is held at the full moon, and the Tawadehntha at the first of the waning moon. The former celebrates the eating of the celestial nogana by Gautauma Buddha before he combated with the spirit of sin and death. In commemoration of this event the monks are feasted. The offerings of viands, rice, and fruit to be presented are displayed beforehand at the houses of the donors, where public receptions are held during the evening. The dingy, grey bamboo house of the man who makes the offerings is laid open to the street by removing the flaps, and is gaily decorated inside with embroidered hangings.

His womankind and their friends appear bedecked in magnificent jewellery, owned or borrowed, and every visitor is given a hearty welcome, while lemonade, pickled tea, and betel-nut are provided for all. The streets are the scene of revelry all night; bands are braying, clowns performing, men dancing about masquerading as dragons or Nats, and pwés are being performed to crowded audiences till the day dawns, and the gifts are deposited in the alms-bowls of the phongyees, or are conveyed to the kioungs. In Rangoon, where the simplicity of ancient ceremonies is being exchanged for the vulgarity and ostentation bred of intercourse with Europe, the offerings, instead of being displayed in the house of the donor and the public reception held there, are often conveyed with singing and dancing to the rest-houses or zayats, or even to the kioung itself, when the sacred precincts become the scene of a veritable saturnalia. This is very much to be regretted, as indeed

everything which tends to lessen the influence and lower the ascetic standard of the monks.

This carnival is followed immediately by the Tawadehntha festival, in which the Burmans are given full opportunities to display their love of gorgeous decoration. The festival is in celebration of the occasion when the Lord Buddha ascended to the second heaven of the Nats to preach the law to his mother, Maya, the queen of the Dewahs. A platform sixty or seventy feet from the ground is erected on some open space. Above it is suspended a seven-roofed spire gaily decorated. The pious or the vain, as the case may be, dress themselves up in gorgeous apparel, and masquerade as kings with smart pages and attendants, or as Nats bearing dazzling wings on their shoulders, or Dewahs robed in silks as brilliant as the clouds at sunset. When the moon is up, a great gilt statue of a sitting Gautauma is gradually hoisted up the sloping way, followed by a brilliant crowd of worshippers in the fanciful costumes described, bearing torches in their hands, and chanting hymns of praise. When the platform is reached, the sermon, recorded in the sacred books as that which Gautauma preached to the Nats, is delivered in a stentorian voice. In it the believer is exhorted to offer love and gratitude to the mother who bore him. The descent from the platform is made the next evening with the same ceremonies.

For three days the streets are filled with processions of young men and maidens, who dance while accompanying the splendid offerings which it is customary to make to the pagodas and monasteries at this festival. Religious dancing differs entirely from the posturing of the pwé, and consists of capering in a fantastic and often vigorous manner. The offerings are generally trees, similar to our Christmas-trees, hung with presents of every kind, or sometimes, if presented by a wealthy donor, with gold and silver coins. Spires, similar to that suspended over the platform, made of bamboo,

and gaily painted and gilded, are also presented to the pagodas, and are borne on poles through the streets. Men wearing masks as ogres, or disguised as animals, are to be seen in the crowd of pleasure-seekers, and a huge paper dragon, a hundred feet long, with its body expanded by hoops, and its inside, great jaws, and staring eyes lit by candles, is carried on the shoulders of a number of men, as it writhes in violent contortions on its way, till deposited at the pagoda.[1]

CROWNED WITH FLOWERS FOR THE PAGODA FESTIVAL.

Besides these great feasts, celebrated with so much extravagance of mirth and money, there are minor religious festivals, which take place all the year round, and are very popular. The pilgrimages to the pagodas and shrines in the country give the opportunity for an outing and picnic, for the meeting of friends and lovers, the retailing of news, and, not least, the storing up of "merit" for the great account. Every shrine has its special holy day, when the people come from all the country round in their bullock-carts and dressed in their best. The girls, with their dark tresses crowned with flowers, the young men in pink silk pasohs and turbans, the fathers and mothers happy and free

[1] I have seen a similar dragon carried through the streets at Otzu, in Japan, on a fête day.

from care; all crowd to the shrine to repeat the great commandments of Lord Buddha and to make their offerings, after which they gather to hear a birth-story given by the play-actors or represented by marionettes, or they stroll through the woods, or gossip about friends and acquaintances, and thus the pagoda feast is celebrated happily and innocently.

Then there are the four duty days in the month, which correspond to our Sundays. These occur on the eighth day of the crescent moon, at the full moon, the eighth day of the waning, and at the change. Warning is given that a duty day is about to commence by old men who perambulate the streets the previous evening striking a triangular gong. If the pagoda is distant, arrangements are made for an early start in the morning, or perhaps the family party arrive overnight, and take up their temporary abode in one of the numerous rest-houses or zayats, always to be found in the precincts of a pagoda. Offerings are invariably brought for the monks, and on arrival a message is sent to the monastery, and a senior phongyee comes and recites to the little congregation the ten precepts and reads portions of the sermons of Gautauma. A litany of praise is sung, and all those present kneel, clasping the sweet-smelling frangipani in their hands, and join in the chant with great devotion, after which the monks retire, the students bearing the offerings. The family party then range themselves on the floor round a large red lacquer dish and partake of the meal of rice and ngapee. The kindly nature of the Burmese is shown on these occasions, for any stranger will be invited to the simple meal at the zayat, or if anybody has brought some especial delicacy, it is freely shared with those less fortunate. An excursion is now made to the platform of

A TEMPLE GONG.

BOUND FOR THE PAGODA.

the pagoda, where doxologies are sung before the shrine of Buddha. The frivolous and gay then spend the rest of the day in gossiping or flirting, but the devout stay near the pagoda and tell the hundred and eight beads of their rosaries, and repeat, "All is transient, sorrowful, and vain; The Lord, the Law, the Assembly, the three precious things;" or they adjourn to a kioung and discuss holy topics with a learned prior. To the young a duty day is a picnic, to the old a relief from monotony, and to both young and old an opportunity to take one step nearer the far-off perfection, to accumulate "merit," to honour Buddha, and to treasure his commandments and precepts.

Congregations are not drawn together, as on Sundays in an English city, to listen to the eloquence of a favourite preacher, for in Burma the same moral precepts, the same commandments, are dinned into the ears of the Buddhists from infancy to old age:—"Thou shalt not kill any living thing; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt not lie or deceive; thou shalt not take any intoxicating thing;" and they are bidden to meditate on the three great perfections, which are generous kindness to parents and relations, great offerings made in past and present existences, and general benevolence; to practise the ten great virtues, namely, liberality, obedience to the law, retreat into solitude for contemplation, diligence, patience, fortitude, wisdom, benevolence, truthfulness, and indifference, and to try to be willing to make the five great renunciations, viz., to give up for holiness' sake all that is best loved, wife, children, wealth, life, and one's whole self.

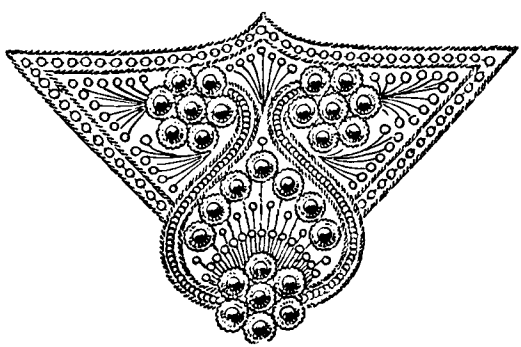
Such a lofty ideal cannot be reached in one existence, or indeed in many, and perhaps one of the reasons why the Buddhists are so happy in their religion is because it is full of hope. Every one can work out his salvation in time, and almost infinite time is given him in which to attain

perfection. No gloomy and despairing doctrine of eternal damnation haunts the Buddhist, and makes death the portal of unknown terrors. Resting secure in the doctrine of accumulated merit, he believes that all good fortune in this world is the result of some good and unselfish act in a past existence, and that deeds of unkindness, meanness, uncharitableness, and disobedience to the law must inevitably be atoned for, either in this life or in a future existence on earth, probably in a lower animal form. Though Nirvana, the highest state of existence, in which passion is lost in perfect peace and selfish individuality in the eternal spirit, is the ultimate good, yet Nirvana is so very far off, even for the best of human creatures when they die, and the round of existences in the lower heavens promises so many enjoyments, that the Burmese Buddhist is happy as he goes up to the pagoda to worship at the great golden shrine, believing that his act of devotion will be remembered in his favour by the kindly Nats (the Buddhist recording angels), and that even the poorest of mankind may attain by constant endeavour, by unweary charity, and by self-renunciation to the highest happiness and to the greatest perfection. So unceasingly the same great moral precepts and commandments are repeated on duty days and pagoda feasts, and whenever the calm passionless face of the great teacher is seen carved on a rock by the river-bank, or gleaming in the shadow of a shrine, or even when the white or gilded pinnacle of a pagoda erected to his memory appears on mound or cliff, the same doxologies, deprecating the passions of the flesh, the lust of gold, the pride of life, are prayerfully said, till they cannot fail to make a deep impression on a people so susceptible as the Burmans.

"Do you make many converts?" I asked of one of the Catholic missionary fathers at Mandalay, after being present at the high mass in the beautiful chapel, built by a wealthy and devout Burman convert.

"Not many," was the frank reply. "How can it be expected? Buddhism is such a fine faith, and there are such very good Buddhists."

In subsequent chapters the fundamental beliefs of Buddhism will be considered, and the influence exercised by this ancient religion on the people of Burma.



CHAPTER XX

THE ARTS AND INDUSTRIES OF THE BURMANS

AT the foot of the first staire at Dagon I found in a faire hall a very large Bell, which we measured, and found to be seven paces and three hand-bredths, and it is full of letters from the top to the bottome, and so neare together that one toucheth the other; thay are very well and neatly made, but there was no Nation that would understand them, no, not the men of Pegu, and they remember not whence, no nor how it came thither."[1]

So wrote Gasparo Balbi three hundred years ago, and thus we see that the great bell on the platform at the Shway Dagohn aroused the interest of the travellers of the sixteenth century as much as it excites the wonderment of present-day tourists.

Bell-founding is a very ancient handicraft of the Burmese people, and in the precincts of every pagoda bells of all sizes may be found suspended from strong teak beams. Against the largest of these, stag-horns lie on the ground, and with them the bell is struck three times when a Burman wishes to give notice to the guardian spirits that he has performed an act of devotion. The Burmese bells, like the temple gongs, give out a very pure sound.

The Maha Ganda, "the sweet great voice" of the Shway Dagohn, is probably the great bell mentioned by the Italian traveller. It has had a strange history. After the conclusion of the second Burmese war, the British soldiers tried to carry

[1] Travels of Gasparo Balbi in 1579: "Purchas' Pilgrims," vol. ii. p. 1726.

it away as a spoil of war, and succeeded in getting it on board a boat, which capsized, and the great bell went to the bottom of the muddy Rangoon river. Some years later the Burmans got permission to recover possession of the sacred bell, if they could succeed in raising it from its watery bed. This difficult task was accomplished, and Maha Ganda again adorns the platform of the pagoda, and is sheltered beneath a "faire hall" resplendent with carving and gilding. This bell weighs twenty-five tons, and is covered with Pali inscriptions, the letters that "there was no nation that would understand."

Another great bell at the Shway Dagohn was cast by the order of King Mindohn. The Maha Ganda is, however, small compared to the great bell at Mengohn, which weighs no less than ninety tons, and is, with the exception of the "Great Monarch" at Moscow, the largest bell in the world, and fourteen times heavier than the great bell of St. Paul's. It was cast by order of King Bodoahpra, who wished to be remembered as the sovereign who had constructed the largest pagoda and the heaviest bell in Burma. But alas! for the vanity of human hopes! The unfinished pagoda of King Bodoahpra has been made a heap of ruins by the shock of an earthquake, and the sweet tone of the great bell will never be heard again, as the supports have given way and its rim rests on the ground. (*See* Appendix.)

Burmese bells are cast by the ancient and artistic method known as *cire-perdu*. When some wealthy man has decided to "win merit" by presenting a bell to the pagoda, the occasion is one that interests the whole neighbourhood. The great clay model is made, coated with wax, and covered on the outside with a layer of clay. The crucibles containing the bubbling amalgam of copper and tin are placed upon the open furnaces around. Bands of musicians fill the air with wild music, and songs are sung in chorus by the crowd; the excitement and enthusiasm become intense; women take off their

gold bangles and necklaces and throw them into the melting-pots; the hot metal hisses and splutters as it is poured into the mould, the melted wax flows out, and the bell is cast. The Pali inscription, in which the donor's name, his works of charity, and his hopes of reward are set forth, is then chiselled on the surface.[1]

The great brazen statues of Buddha are cast in the same way, and with similar marks of public rejoicing. The figure is then borne to the pagoda in public procession, with music and dancing; the women are dressed in their gayest clothes, and wealthy men compete for the honour of being one of the bearers of the statue.

There are but three orthodox ways of representing Gautauma Buddha; he must either be standing in the attitude of preaching, or sitting cross-legged in the attitude of contemplation, or lying down in the act of dying. The features must represent a passionless calm, the fingers always be all of the same length, and the ears pendulous. These details are regulated by tradition, and the Burmese sculptor dare not be original or depart from ancient custom. The largest Buddhas are constructed of brick and plaster or of marble. There is no metal statue in Burma so large as the bronze Buddha standing in the open air at Kamakura in Japan. The brass statue at the Arakan Pagoda in Mandalay is about twelve feet in height. It is said to have been cast in Arakan in the second century, though the Burmese credit it with a more ancient and miraculous origin. They tell that the Lord Buddha went to Arakan, where he was the guest of the King, Chanda Surya. When he was about to depart, the King begged him to leave with him some representation of himself. Many efforts were made by the metal-workers and sculptors of that day to cast a portrait-statue, but they failed; and finally this

[1] See Appendix, translation of the inscription on the bell in the South Kensington Museum.

CARVING BUDDHAS.

image was miraculously produced, to be a record for ever of the features of the great teacher of the perfect law.

The European travellers to the magnificent city of Pegu at the time of Bareng Naung, in the sixteeenth century, speak of immense statues of brass, copper, and also of gold and silver; but these figures have all disappeared, and the venerable statue from Arakan is the most antique relic of a very ancient art.

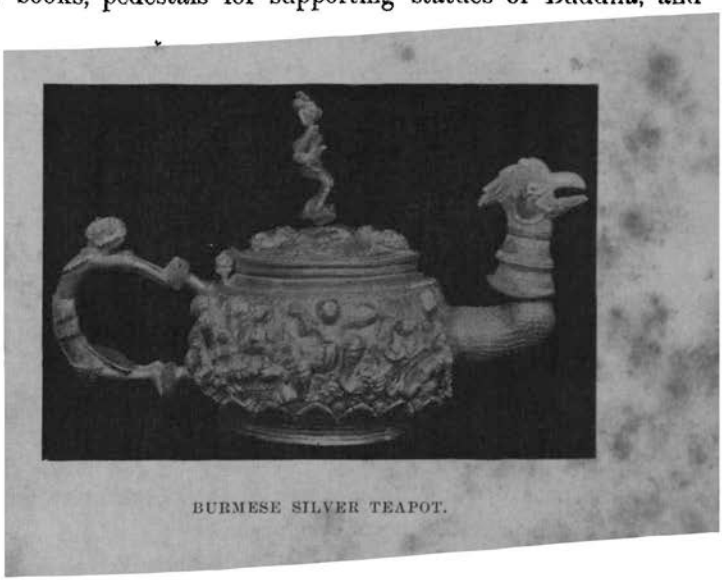
Statues of Buddha carved in marble or alabaster are very common, and to give one to a pagoda is a usual act of piety; in fact, so many are given, that they are stored away in the great image-chambers near the principal shrine, where none but the donors of the statues and the Nats remember that the gifts have been made. The marble for these statues is obtained from the quarries at Sagaing. At the foot of Mandalay Hill there is a monstrous monolith of marble, and over this great Buddha a sheltering roof has been built. Sometimes the rocks are carved into immense images of Buddha, specimens of which may be seen by the traveller coming down the river, just below Prome. Most of the largest images of Gautauma are, however, built of brick covered with plaster. Many of the great statues I saw in the ruins of Amaurapoora were thus constructed, as was also the gigantic figure that once sat near the lagoon outside the city walls, and the recumbent figures at Pagahn, which Yule describes as ninety feet long. Smaller images are made of wood, gilded and embossed with glass mosaics, or of bamboo lacquered and gilded. Tradition asserts that three of the great statues in the temple of Ananda at Pagahn are of different kinds of wood, and one of brass.

Gongs, emitting when struck a wonderfully sweet and musical sound, can be bought for a few pence in the bazaar held in the approaches to any pagoda. A triangular gong of a special shape is sacred to the temples, and suspended

from a string, is struck in the streets to remind the devout of their religious duties. The ear-tubes worn by the women are often very curiously fashioned by the silversmiths, and the silver teapots, milk-jugs, trays, and bowls, made from Burmese designs for the English market, are striking and grotesque in design. Weights are quaintly cast in the form of the Brahminy goose. The making of the metal htees (umbrellas), which crown every pagoda, employs a great number of metal-workers; they are usually made of iron gilded, but sometimes of solid gold.

GONG.

A peculiarly Burmese decorative art is the inlaying of pieces of mirror-glass in gilded cement. Boxes in which to keep books, pedestals for supporting statues of Buddha, and



BURMESE SILVER TEAPOT.

the enrichments of columns in the palaces and golden kioungs, are made in this style. The work is barbaric but effective.

The Burmese greatly excel in wood-carving, and before the

annexation it was an art which entered into their daily lives. The high-prowed steering chairs of their paddy boats, the eaves of their zayats and kioungs, the screens of their shrines, the spires of their palaces, were all richly decorated with carvings in high relief. Now that many of the religious buildings are falling into ruin, and the funds of the royal coffers are no

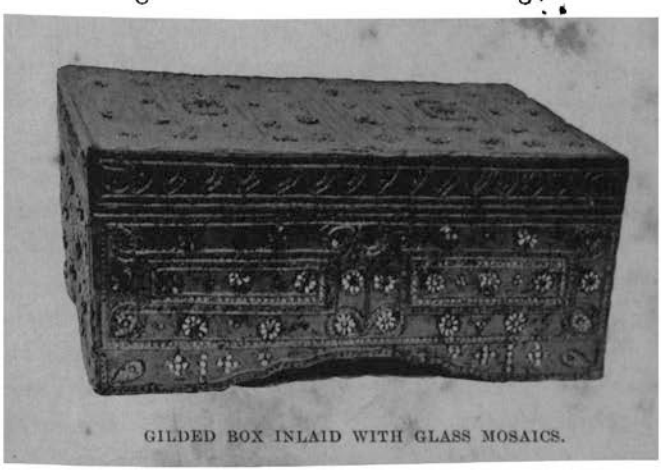
BURMESE SILVER SUGAR BASIN.

longer available for the erection of palaces and "works of merit," the wood-carvers cannot find employment, and are reduced to making writing-tables and over-mantels for the English conquerors. And very wonderful and elaborate pieces of work these are, the Burmese, like the Chinese, delighting in carving delicate tracery over hollow columns out of single blocks of wood. The spirited and graceful rendering of Nats and fairies in hard teak-wood is also admirable. In the prison at Mandalay the incarcerated dacoits are employed in making

excellent carved furniture, and nearly every traveller who goes to Burma buys models of King Theebaw's throne, carved and gilded like the original.

MILK-JUG.

Burmese lacquer-ware, though it has not the artistic qualities of the Japanese, is an unique and interesting production. Anybody can buy in the bazaars betel-boxes of all sizes, utilised by English ladies as powder-boxes or bonnet-boxes, according to their dimensions. These boxes are extremely light and flexible, and are fitted inside with one or two trays, which contain the various ingredients used in betel-chewing; the lid has



GILDED BOX INLAID WITH GLASS MOSAICS.

deep sides, which cover the whole box. They are decorated with intricate patterns composed of lines and dots. These exceedingly well-made boxes are composed of split bamboo, finely woven or wound in concentric rings; over this frame-

work is spread with the hand a coating of wood-oil or thi'see, which is the sap obtained from the stem of a forest tree, the botanical name of which is the *Melanorrhœa usitatissima.* The frame is then put into a cool airy place to dry. At the end of three days it is hard and dry; a coating of a mixture of bone-ash, wood-oil, and rice-water is then smoothly laid on. When quite dry, the box is polished on a lathe, a third coating of bone-ash and wood-oil is laid on, allowed to dry, and then polished. The lacquer is now black, with a smooth polished surface. The next thing to do is to put on the pattern. This is done in a most ingenious way. The box is put on the lathe, and with a split style charged with wood-oil, concentric wavy lines and dots are drawn in at once, without being previously sketched. The lines when dry are raised above the surface. The box is now covered with red paint, replaced on the lathe, and rubbed down with wood-ashes. The paint is thus removed from over the raised lines and the black pattern stands out boldly on a red ground. One or more colours can now be added by incising a pattern on the surface with a pointed instrument, covering the box with a coating of the desired colour, and rubbing it down on the lathe till only the coloured pattern is left. When the decoration is finished, a final coat of clear varnish is given, and a high polish is obtained by rubbing the surface with powdered petrified wood. The test of excellence in a lacquer box is to bend in the sides until they touch without breaking the bamboo-work or cracking the varnish. Of the pigments used, red is vermilion, yellow is orpiment, green is obtained by mixing finely ground indigo with yellow orpiment, and the wood-oil itself produces the black colour.

Thi'see, or wood-oil, is employed for many industrial purposes. It is used to coat wood before gilding, to varnish umbrellas in order to make them waterproof, and to paint racing-boats to render them watertight. The alms-bowl of

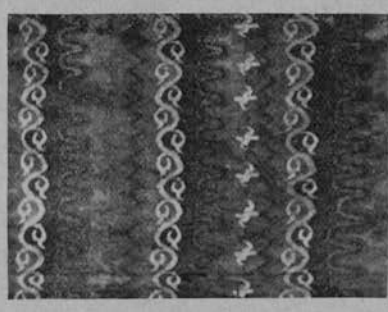
the phongyee, the circular dish which serves for dinner-table and *couvert*, are also made of lacquer-ware.

The industry is at present a very close one; the patterns are handed down from father to son, and the skill displayed within certain narrow limits is considerable. The best work is done at Nyoung-oo.

If, instead of the large, I might almost say the disastrous, amount of literary education which turns thousands of young Burmans into clerks, the Government gave some practical encouragement to native industries, by establishing technical and industrial schools in the midst of groups of workers, to teach drawing, modelling, and designing, there is every reason to believe that the lacquer industry of Burma might become of industrial and artistic importance. The wood-oil is now obtained from a tree which grows wild in the jungle, and no care is taken, as in Japan, to cultivate it in plantations. It is a fine forest tree of great size, and bears masses of white blooms.

One of the efforts of the present Government is to preserve the great and valuable forests from the depredations of the migratory cultivator, who clears a patch of ground by burning down the trees, planting a crop, and then moving off and doing the same on another site. Endeavours are therefore made to induce these primitive farmers to settle, by giving them inducements to cultivate silkworms. A mountain people called the Yabehns, who seem to be free from the religious objection to take life, are engaged in the industries of silkworm-growing and silk-winding. The silk grown in Burma is coarse and inferior in quality, consequently the handsome damask tameins worn by the women are made of imported Chinese silk, and are woven on small handlooms, which may be seen outside almost every house in the country. The damask design is produced by a number of tiny shuttles, which are passed in and out of the warp, in the same way as in suzuri-weaving. I have counted as many as a hundred

shuttles on a piece of cloth not more than twenty inches wide. The earnings are very small; a woman working all day cannot earn more than four rupees a month, and not more than a hand's-breadth of a complicated pattern can be woven in a week. The best workers are the Manipurians. Manchester imitations are unfortunately beginning to debase the public taste. If the silk-weaving industry of Burma were encouraged by the Government, who, working in conjunction with merchants and manufacturers, should provide technical teaching and an organised system of help, it might become, I believe, highly remunerative both to the workers and promoters.



SILK DAMASK.

The gorgeous embroidery of hangings in gold and silver thread, enriched with spangles and cut-glass jewels, is peculiarly Burmese. The design generally represents dancing figures surrounded by well-drawn decorative borders. In houses, palaces, and theatres where outside walls were absent, hangings became an important element in decoration, and were embroidered as a matter of course.

The fine yellow colour of the robes worn by the phongyees shows that the Burmans have some knowledge of dyeing; this yellow dye is obtained from the wood of the jack-tree (*Artocarpus integrifolia*). Blue is obtained from indigo, and other dyes from various jungle plants. The brilliant crimsons, blues, and pinks of the tameins and pasohs are not the result of native dyeing, as the silk yarns with which they are woven are, as has already been mentioned, imported from China.

The industrial arts of Burma are not many, as the wants

of the people are so few; but with the impetus which is being given to the development of the country, and the consequent creation of new wants, it is earnestly to be hoped that technical teaching will be provided, and that hand industries will be encouraged in every possible way. The increased happiness and prosperity of agricultural countries in Europe, from the introduction or development of small and artistic industries, have been so marked, that it is earnestly to be hoped that the native arts of wood-carving, lacquer, and silk-weaving, will not be allowed to die out. The industrial and technical schools of Japan afford the most excellent models to the British Government in Burma. The two peoples are similar in race, ideas, religion, and sentiment; and after allowing for the differences due to climate, I believe that much of the technical skill which is so marked in the Japanese might be developed in the Burmese. Of the intelligence of the people there is no doubt, and their manual skill is of a high order; their needs are few, and the extensive encouragement of small artistic industries to be carried out in their homes would ensure a great increase of happiness and well-being, which would do more to consolidate the British power and to establish British rule in the hearts of the people than all the guns of the cantonments. The governors and the governed would have one aim—the greatest good of the greatest number—and we should cease to hear the complaint, "We grow poorer and poorer," and the lament for the good times now past, when the King employed the skill of hundreds of wood-carvers, metal-workers, weavers, and embroiderers. Where hundreds were once employed thousands could now be at work, if the object in view be not to let native industries die, so that Burma may be a market for Manchester and Birmingham, but to make the people industrial and the country self-supporting and prosperous. We owe at least this endeavour to a conquered people, otherwise conquest is but cupidity and government self-interest.

CHAPTER XXI

MONARCHS AND MINISTERS

"I SUPPOSE there is not in the whole world a monarch so despotic as the Burmese Emperor;" so wrote Sangermano a hundred years ago. Indeed, history cannot show a despotism more absolute than was that of the Burmese Empire. The King was lord, not only of the soil, but of the lives, the persons, and the properties of his subjects; they were his slaves, and his slightest will or wish was law. Whatever was the rank of a nobleman, he could be ordered out to instant execution if the King gave the command, as was the case with the Pakan-Woon in the first Burmese war. Mr. Crawfurd describes how a distinguished minister of state was for some offence condemned to be "spread-eagled in the sun," which punishment consisted of being exposed to the hot sun, lying on his back in the public way, with a heavy weight on the chest. King Hpagyi-doa condemned the unfortunate architect of his new palace at Ava to be immediately beheaded, because the golden htee on the spire was struck by lightning.

When a man of means was put to death, his property reverted to the crown, so that in Burma the possession of wealth gave insecurity of life. In order to show the exalted position of the King and the slavery of his subjects, nobody could approach him except bare-footed and without prostrating himself, knees and elbows, on the ground, putting the hands up with closed palms to the forehead, and shekoeing, or bowing down, as before the statue of Buddha. It was the insistence on these signs of slavish submission, and the necessity of coming before

the King with unshod feet, which the military officers and representatives of the British Government at the Court of Ava so deeply resented, and which led to such strained relations between the two Governments. The volumes published by the early envoys to Burma are filled with complaints of the indignities which were put upon them, and the persistent attempts made by means of an elaborate court etiquette to exalt the position of the King of Burma, and to degrade the representatives of the British Government in the eyes of his people.

The King had alone the power of declaring war and making peace, and he could at any time call upon the whole male population of the country to enlist in his army. The figures given by the Portuguese travellers of the sixteenth century, and by the Burmese chroniclers, of the number of soldiers in the armies, which were sent on wars of foreign invasion, seem largely exaggerated; but when the system of conscription is remembered, and the fact that the country was steadily depopulated by the wars of the King, it is probable that the armies were vast masses of the youth and manhood of the nation.

In our first relations with the Court of Burma, the Indian Government saw fit to pander to the absurd pretensions of the Burmese King, and to address him in the following fulsome terms:—"Placing above our heads the golden majesty of the mighty lord, the possessor of the mines of rubies, amber, gold, silver, and all kinds of metals; of the lord under whose command are innumerable soldiers, generals, and captains; of the lord who is king of many countries and provinces, and emperor over many rulers and princes, who wait round the throne with the badges of his authority; of the lord who is adorned with the greatest power, wisdom, knowledge, prudence, foresight, &c.; of the lord who is rich in the possession of elephants and horses, and in particular is the lord of many white elephants;

THE "CENTRE OF THE UNIVERSE."

of the lord who is the greatest of kings, the most just and the most religious, the master of life and death,—we, his slaves, the Governor of Bengal, the officers and administrators of the Company, bowing and lowering our heads under the sole of his golden foot, do present to him, with the greatest veneration, this our humble petition."

Inasmuch as the Burmese Emperor would acknowledge no equal, so the court historiographer must not chronicle the fact that the Burmese army had been defeated; thus when it was his duty to record the first Burmese war, the payment of the war indemnity and the loss of the province of Pegu, he writes as a matter of history: "In the years 1186 and 87 (1823–1824) the Kula-pyu, or white strangers of the West, fastened a quarrel upon the Lord of the Golden Palace. They landed at Rangoon, took that place and province, and were permitted to advance as far as Yandabo; for the King, from motives of piety and regard to life, made no effort whatever to oppose them. The strangers had spent vast sums of money in their enterprise; by the time they reached Yandabo their resources were exhausted, and they were in great distress. They petitioned the King, who, in his clemency and generosity, sent them large sums of money to pay their expenses back, and ordered them out of the country."

The common title of the King was the "Golden Foot," under which were placed all the people of the earth. Golden was, in fact, an adjective always applied to every part of his royal person; a perfume was said to be agreeable to his golden nose, and words of wisdom to fall from his golden mouth. Over his throne rose a spire of great elegance crowned by a golden htee, which spot was proudly called "the Centre of the Universe."

When the King went out into the streets on his elephant or in a carriage, the people were obliged to retire into their houses. Along the edge of the pathway of the streets of the

royal city were wooden palisades, with whitewashed trellis-work six feet high, behind which the common people had to stand, in awe and silence, as the King and his cortège passed by.

Once a year the King and his ministers made a grand procession in gorgeous state through the streets to the paddy fields in the plains outside, an acre of which was ploughed by the King, according to an ancient custom of some thousands of years standing.[1] It was in June, about the time of the breaking of the south-west monsoon, that the pageant took place. The King issued from the courtyard of his palace mounted on the royal white elephant, and dressed in his gorgeous robes of state. On his head was worn a crown, which was a mass of jewels, and from his shoulder hung a coat thickly encrusted with precious stones. He was followed by all the officers of state, each one in full court dress, with tall red mitre-shaped hats on their heads, and in long velvet coats resplendent with gold brocade. Mounted on elephants of great size, each official was followed by a train of attendants bearing golden or red umbrellas. As the splendid procession wended its way down the long straight streets of Mandalay, not a person was to be seen, not a sound to be heard, for the people were crowded behind the lattice palisades of the footway, through the interstices of which they were not even supposed to look at the King.

Arrived at the field which was to be ploughed by the King, he dismounted from the white elephant and took his place on a gilded plough, set with jewels, to which a pair of

[1] When the Lord Buddha was an infant (2500 years ago), his nurses left him under the shadow of a jambu tree while they went to see King Thoodau-dana and his nobles perform the annual ceremony of ploughing. They became so interested that they forgot their royal charge. On their return, however, to the tree where they had left him, they found that the Nats had kept watch during their long absence, and had worked a miracle, so that the shadow of the boughs fell always on the sleeping infant, in spite of the change of the position of the sun in the heavens. This, as well as other stories in the life of Buddha, shows how very ancient are many of the customs of the Burmese and the Indians.

milk-white oxen, with gilded horns, were attached by bands of crimson and gold. Taking the jewelled gold goad in one hand and the reins, studded with diamonds and rubies, in the other, his Majesty steadily ploughed two or three furrows of the soft, wet earth. All the princes and ministers had to do the same, each standing on his own plough, and they were, in fact, obliged to work as long as the King chose to look on. The heavy gold and bejewelled state garments were then taken off, and the King used to return to the palace in a low gilded car drawn by men, while attendants fanned him assiduously to cool him after his exertions. This royal ploughing was supposed to bring good luck and to ensure a prosperous harvest.

In order to exalt the royal power and influence, and to bring all princes, chiefs, and ministers into submission to the "Golden Foot," there was held at least once a year, at the beginning of Lent, a great reception in the King's Hall of Audience on what was called a kadaw or beg-pardon day. On these occasions the King deigned to receive propitiatory gifts from loyal subjects. The procession of the princes and noblemen with their retinues through the streets, mounted on magnificent elephants with gorgeous howdahs and trappings, has often been described by the various envoys from the Indian Government to the Court of Ava. It was one of their grievances that, in order to belittle the mission and the Government they represented, their public reception by the King used to take place on a beg-pardon day, and they were obliged to take rank after the princes and great noblemen. The most rigid etiquette was observed in matters of precedent. At the inner stockade of the palace the princes and noblemen left their palanquins or litters, or dismounted from their elephants, and proceeded on foot to the great Hall of Audience, doing obeisance at stated intervals to the spire over the throne. In the great hall everybody had a place assigned to him according to his rank, and he at once took

up his position on the floor in the attitude of submission. When all were assembled, the scene was gorgeous in the extreme. On the signal being given that the King was coming, all the grandees prostrated themselves elbows and knees on the ground; the King, dressed in heavy royal robes of gold and jewels, and wearing a towering jewelled crown on his head, ascended the throne. The lists of presents were then read out from a palm leaf, in a loud voice and in stilted language, by a herald, the full titles of the King and expressions of the greatest adulation being used every time. Sometimes the King would address questions and remarks to ministers or to foreigners present, but should he so choose he would remain absolutely silent, gazing over the prostrate forms of the splendidly attired princes, chieftains, and noblemen before him, whom the King, Mindohn Min, is said to have occasionally observed through a field-glass.

All noblemen had the right of having lictors precede them in the streets. These men went naked with the exception of a small loin-cloth, and carried rods which they used with vigour on any unfortunate person who happened to be in the way. Closely connected with them were the constables or "spotted men," so called because they had a circle tattooed on the cheek to signify that they had been condemned for capital crimes, but had been reprieved to act as constables, jailors, and executioners. On the chest were tattooed words signifying the crimes of which they were guilty, such as murderer, thief, dacoit. In life the "spotted men" were hated and feared, and in death they were dishonoured.

Though polygamy is not in harmony with Buddhism, and though the King is universally the chief patron of the Buddhist religion in Burma, polygamy of the most revolting kind was the rule of life of the kings of Burma. In order to keep the royal blood pure, the King on ascending his throne married his half-sister, and sometimes he has been known to

marry two of his half-sisters. There were generally four principal queens, each of whom lived in a gilded palace in the royal compound. Besides these there were lesser queens and wives, and any number of concubines. Mindohn Min had one hundred and twenty-six children; but his extensive experience of matrimony induced him to openly express the opinion that polygamy was a bad system. It led to an enormous number of aspirants to the throne, for there was no settled law of heredity; the heir-apparent was generally selected by the King during his lifetime, and he might be one of his numerous sons or one of his brothers, as he chose. The choice was not, however, generally maintained after his death, except by the wholesale massacre of inconvenient relatives. The intermarriage also of half-brothers and sisters had disastrous moral and physical consequences. The principal Queen was not, however, always of royal birth. The Queen who had so much influence over King Hpagyi-doa was the sister of a fishmonger, and her brother, the Menthagyi, was raised to the highest position in the state during the first Burmese war.

Though the King was a despotic tyrant, the form of government in Burma was theoretically fairly good. All the edicts of the King had to be registered by the Hlwot-daw or Supreme Council, so called from the building in which the high court was held. The Hlwot-daw consisted of four chief ministers called Woon-gyees. Their edicts and commands were written on palm leaves shaped like a sabre. Each Woon-gyee had a deputy called a Woon-douk, and each Woon-douk had two or more secretaries, whose business it was to record the proceedings of the Hlwot-daw, and who were called "the great royal scribes." Besides the Hlwot-daw there was a second or Privy Council, and the King's edicts were first discussed by this body before being presented to the Supreme Council. The Privy Council consisted of four ministers called Atwen-woons, with a number of secretaries and deputies. The Atwen-woons had the ear

of the King, and exercised great influence over him. There were, besides, many other offices, such as the treasurer, the keeper of the forests, and the keeper of the concubines, and

A MINISTER OF STATE.

even the bearers of the King's betel-box and umbrella were dignified with official titles.

Any person of the lowest birth and the most disreputable character could be raised by the will of the King to the

highest position in the state, and a minister could be degraded by the same royal will; in fact, the deliberations of the Supreme Council and the Privy Council were held only to give force to the edicts and commands of the King.

The kingdom was divided into provinces, provinces into townships, townships into districts, and districts into hamlets or villages. The governor of a province was called a Myo-woon, and he had the entire charge of the province, civil, judicial, military, and fiscal, and the power of life and death. He also had a council, formed of the collectors of customs and duties. Under the Myo-woon was the governor of a township or Myo-thoo-gyees, and the governors of villages or Thoo-gyees.

No official received any salary. A governor was euphoniously called a "province-eater," and he obtained his wealth by means of taxes, customs, and assessments levied on the people of his district. When a favourite Queen had to be provided for or an officer of state to be rewarded, they were assigned provinces in the kingdom, which they proceeded to "eat." Every family was taxed as much as it was supposed to be able to pay; every subordinate official received his share of the tax, and the governor finally divided with the King the portion which he received. From time to time, as when war was declared, the people were called upon to make extra contributions to the state treasury. The Hlwot-daw decided on the amount, and Burman officials were sent forth to prey upon the unfortunate country people, and to obtain from them all that was possible.

Every city had a hall of justice called the Ion or public portico, and here the governor was obliged to sit and hear causes every day; but bribery was so universal, and justice was so commonly bought, that the governor frequently decided cases privately according to the amount of the bribe offered.

Upon the accession of the King, Mindohn Min, corruption,

extortion, and bribery were rampant in the government of the country, but this monarch did his utmost to change established customs, and by royal edicts and by example to enforce justice and good government. In one edict (1853) he declared that if land had been forcibly taken from its owners "by the King's brothers or sons, the queens, nobles, or any of the officers of state," royal permission for its repossession could be obtained on the matter being submitted to the Hlwot-daw. In another edict bribery is strongly condemned, and the courts of justice, and the kind of cases to be judged in them, are defined with great exactness, as well as the fees to be paid in silver; for, says the King, "The nobles and officers of my royal elder brother, the chief of righteousness, did not pay any attention to their duties: they received large bribes of gold and silver and decided unjustly; the poor people our subjects were thereby greatly harassed and distressed," but in future, "the proper and established fees only shall be taken; no further sums should be extorted, but if, in contravention of this my established and royal proclamation, any one receives more than the established fees, he shall be punished by the ministers in accordance with his guilt."

Unfortunately, King Theebaw did not follow in the footsteps of his father, and the sincere efforts made by King Mindohn Min to bring order out of disorder, and to substitute just government for the most corrupt administration, did not have a sufficiently long trial. In order to raise a revenue in a more legitimate way than by allowing governors to oppress and tax the people, Mindohn Min established a system of monopolies, and became a merchant on a large scale. A certain number of the products of the country, namely, cotton, cutch, teak, timber, lead, and rubies, he obliged his people to sell to him at certain fixed prices, and he sold them again at a profit. In this way a revenue of about £250,000 was raised: but it is obvious that such a system must cripple trade and stifle enter-

prise. Still this paternal and well-meant system of monopolies of Mindohn Min was a great improvement on the oppression and exaction of former kings and governors of Burma.

In the latter days of the Burmese Empire, some of the ministers distinguished themselves for ability and statecraft. In the reign of King Theebaw two men were head and shoulders above the others, and it would have been well for King Theebaw had he consented to listen to their advice, instead of to the promptings of Queen Supayah Lat. One was the Kin Woon-gyee, the foreign secretary. He was educated in a monastery, and was twice sent to Europe on embassies; his influence was always on the side of order, and if he had had the opportunity the fate of Burma might have been different. The other official of note was the Pan-gyet-woon; he was educated in Calcutta, and went from there to Paris, where he obtained a diploma in the Central Imperial School of Arts and Manufactures. After remaining twelve years in Europe, he returned to Mandalay, where he aided the King, Mindohn Min, in directing his glass manufactures.

CHAPTER XXII

BURMA SOBER AND BURMA DRUNK

"THOU shalt not take anything that intoxicates" is one of the five great commandments of the Lord Buddha, and which even their enemies will not deny was generally obeyed by the Burmans up till the time of the partial annexation of the country in the first half of this century. In Symes' "Embassy to Ava" in the year 1795, he speaks with enthusiasm and high praise of the extraordinary sobriety of the Burmese on the occasion of a great public festival in the city of Pegu. After describing the great concourse of thousands of people, the games and fireworks, the music and dancing, he says: "It was a spectacle not less pleasing than novel to an European, to witness such a concourse of people of all classes, brought together for the purposes of hilarity and sport, without their committing one act of intemperance, or being disgraced by a single instance of intoxication. What scenes of riot and debauchery would not a similar festival in the vicinity of any capital town of Great Britain inevitably produce!"

After the annexation of Pegu in 1856, Rangoon became flooded with men of every race, and with adventurers of often the lowest character, to many of whom strong drink is the elixir of their excited and dissipated lives. The Indian Government, without due regard of their high duty to the non-abstaining races committed by conquest to their charge, allowed drinking shops, distilleries, and opium dens to be opened in the provinces of Arakan, Tenasserim, and Pegu, in the midst of the temperate but easily tempted Burmans, and

seemed to think that the gathering in of a large revenue from liquor and opium justified the disregard of the vices on which it depended. The effect of this policy was soon seen in the rapid degeneration of the young Burmans of the annexed provinces; so that in 1862 Sir Arthur Phayre reported that "the effect of the Government measures can only be deemed deplorable and disastrous, and that drinking spirits and smoking opium had become almost universal among the Arakanese young men."

Opium-smoking, said to be more destructive and disastrous in its effects than opium-eating, was an evil habit to which the Burmans soon fell easy victims. Almost immediately after the annexation, the Indian Government established licensed shops for the retailing of opium, with no restriction as to the number of shops. Three years afterwards an official report says: "The use of this deleterious drug, strictly prohibited in Burmese times, has been considerably on the increase of late;" and it was also officially stated that "organised efforts were made by Bengal agents to introduce the use of the drug, and to create a taste for it among the rising generation. The general plan was to open a shop with a few cakes of opium, and to invite the young men and distribute it gratuitously. Then, when the taste was established, the opium was sold at a low rate. Finally, as it spread throughout the whole neighbourhood, the price was raised, and large profits ensued." The habit of eating and smoking opium grew with surprising rapidity, so that in 1891 the consumption of opium per head of the population was higher in Lower Burma than in any other province of India.

The best and most respectable of the natives earnestly deplored the growth of the evil, and again and again made representations to the Government on the subject. In 1865 the Chief Commissioner of Burma reported that a large majority of the respectable Arakanese petitioned him, asserting that

"their own children, and most of the young men of the country, had become drunkards, and had acquired within a few years a craving for spirits and opium."

In 1870 Colonel D. Brown, Commissioner of the Tenasserim Division, writes: "In this province the words an opium eater or smoker and a vagabond are, and have been for many years, synonymous. The old and respectable portion of our population complain much of our opium shops and of the evils they bring on them. The sleepy, dreamy state of the opium-smoker has a peculiar attraction for our people; they take it, and after having acquired the habit they cannot give it up. Their friends refuse to support them; they steal, rob, or murder to get their food and their opium; they often take to dacoity and join a frontier band, or, if they remain in the province, they end their days in jail, or a halter puts an end to their existence."

That this statement is not too strong is proved, eight years later, by the Report on the Administration of British Burma taking the same line, and stating that increase of gambling, theft, dacoity, and other crimes were the result of the growth of the liquor and opium habits. In the same year Colonel E. B. Sladen, Commissioner of the Arakan Division, reports that, contrary to all preconceived opinions, he is convinced that "opium is the scourge of the country, and that opium consumption is alarmingly on the increase."

The leading inhabitants of the Akyab added their testimony to that of the British officials, and in a memorial to the Chief Commissioner on March 13, 1878, state: "The consumption of opium is contrary to the religion of the people, and its baneful effects are telling markedly on their character, inducing enervation of both mind and body, unfitting them for the active duties of life, whereby the material progress of the country is retarded." In 1880 the inhabitants of Arakan again petitioned the Government that the opium trade might be altogether

abolished, and offered to pay an extra tax to make up for the loss of the opium revenue.

The Chief Commissioner, collecting all this body of evidence, sums up in the following trenchant words:—

"The papers now presented for consideration present a powerful picture of the demoralisation, misery, and ruin produced amongst the Burmese by opium-smoking. Responsible officers in all divisions and districts of the province, and natives everywhere, bear testimony to it. The reports show that among the Burmans the habitual use of the drug saps the physical and mental energies, destroys the nerves, and emaciates the body, predisposes to disease, induces indolent and filthy habits of life, destroys self-respect, is one of the most fertile sources of misery, destitution, and crime, fills the jails with men of relaxed frames, predisposed to dysentery and cholera, prevents the due extension of cultivation and the development of the land revenue, checks the natural growth of the population, and enfeebles the constitutions of succeeding generations; that opium-smoking is spreading at an alarming rate under our rule does not admit of a doubt. On this point the testimony of all classes of officers and of the people is unanimous."

"There is no sort of doubt," wrote Sir Ashley Eden when Chief Commissioner, "that the consumption of opium and intoxicating drugs has an injurious effect upon the excitable, self-indulgent Burman, which it has not upon the Indian and Chinese. Where its use has been adopted in this country it has led to the immediate demoralisation of the people." In reply to this report, the Governor-General in Council expressed the opinion "that the consumption of opium ought not to be encouraged in Burma." Nevertheless, in six years, between 1871–77, the number of licensed opium shops in the Pegu division increased from eight to twenty-eight.

Officials reported and natives petitioned in vain. The evil

went on increasing and unchecked. Shway Yoe, that warm supporter of English rule and of the policy of annexation, frequently deplores the increase of drunkenness in British Burma. Drinking of beer and spirits was, he states, introduced even into religious festivals, ostensibly to please the English visitors, "the Burman's notion being that an Englishman only leaves off drinking beer when he drinks brandy." He says, however, that a drunken Burman is rarely seen out of Rangoon. The Burmese women strenuously set themselves against drinking and opium-smoking; a man did not dare drink at home, and the girls of a village would not ask a young man who was an opium-smoker to their festivals. Still, nevertheless, the evil grew at such a pace that, in the five years ending 1890, the excise revenue for liquor and opium had increased 80 per cent., and whereas in India the excise revenue yielded four annas per head of the population, in Lower Burma it was more than double, namely, nine annas. In 1891 the licensed opium shops in Lower Burma had reached the high number of sixty-eight. It was in the same year that the reports of the High Commissioners on the subject had attracted attention in England, and a resolution was adopted at the meeting held at the Mansion House on October 25th, declaring that the results of the sale of opium in British Burma were a disgrace to our government in India. Attempts were made by Sir T. Bernard, when Chief Commissioner, to diminish the number of licensed shops, but it had no effect, for the door had been opened wide to a fatal demand, to meet which illicit opium was smuggled in large quantities into the country.

In 1886 Upper Burma was annexed. We found here the use of liquor and opium by Burmans absolutely forbidden by law; a licensed liquor shop did not exist in the country; drunkenness was severely punished in the reign of King Mindohn, and Chinese opium vendors were, when caught, flogged, and even imprisoned. In October of the same year of the

fall of Mandalay, the Government of India announced, in a despatch to the Secretary of State, the principle of prohibition, and instructions were given to civil officers in Upper Burma in these words: "No shops whatever will be licensed for the sale of opium, inasmuch as all respectable classes of Burmans are against legalising the consumption of opium in the new province. . . . As the traffic in opium was prohibited under the Burmese government there will be no hardship in thus proscribing opium dealing."

But in the same document permission is given to Chinamen to sell opium, and "when a real demand exists for liquor to be consumed by Europeans, Indians, and Chinese, shops for the sale of spirits and of fermented liquors may be licensed." Thus the door of opportunity was opened, and, undeterred by the fateful example of the provinces of Arakan and Pegu, Upper Burma, hitherto kept from the vices of intoxication and opium by the influence of its phongyees and the laws of its kings, was given over to temptation in spite of the prayers "of all classes, monks and laity." The half-hearted law of prohibition was of course inoperative, for, in fact, with shops once licensed in their midst, a Burman could get opium and liquor if he wished.

Five years after the Government had said that it was inexpedient to license drinking shops "for the present," there were, it is stated by Mr. Winston,[1] 175 licensed liquor shops, and distilleries were established, licensed by Government, for the wholesale manufacture of spirits. The first year after this famous despatch the excise revenue from liquor and opium licenses in Upper Burma rose to Rs.210,480, and in two years to Rs.511,700, and in 1893 stood at Rs.3,103,104. It is averred that the Chinese, who held the licenses for the opium dens, taught the young Burmans how to smoke, and soon

[1] "Four Years in Upper Burma."

opium was openly bought and smoked by them, to the despair of the Buddhist monks and abbots, and of all respectable Burmans. So impossible did it seem to stem the insidious evil, that the only practical step seemed to be to bring in the re-enactment of the old law of absolute prohibition of the importation of opium in force in the King's time. On this point Commissioner Aitchison reported: "Native opinion is unanimously in favour of stopping the supply of opium altogether, and no measure we could adopt would be so popular with all the respectable and law-abiding class of the population."

In 1892 Sir A. Mackenzie, the Chief Commissioner, firmly convinced of the evil done the Burmans by the use of opium, recommended that all shops for the sale of opium throughout Burma should be closed, and that opium should be sold only to Burmans holding a medical certificate for a limited time, or to persons, not Burmans, holding annual licences to buy and use opium habitually. This recommendation was considered too stringent, and the Government of India came to the conclusion that the law in force in Upper Burma prohibiting the sale of opium to Burmans had; in spite of the official and native opinion quoted above, worked well, and they determined to apply the same law to Lower Burma.

Briefly, the law restricting the sale and consumption of opium in Burma, introduced in 1893, is as follows:— Any person may possess three tolas of opium purchased from a registered medical practitioner, pharmacist, or doctor for medicinal purposes. In Upper Burma the possession of opium except for medicinal purposes is prohibited. In Lower Burma the same rule applies, with the exception that those Burmans over twenty-five years of age who have applied to be registered as habitual consumers, and proved their assertion, are treated as non-Burmans, and may possess opium lawfully obtained in limited quantities for their private consumption. The excep-

tion is a temporary one, made out of consideration for the present generation of habitual consumers. When the men now registered die, the law will be the same in Lower as in Upper Burma.

In Lower Burma the registration of Burman habitual consumers was commenced in April 1893, and was continued until 30th June 1894. The registers were then closed. In Lower Burma shops for the retail sale of opium are retained in places where there is a considerable number of non-Burmans or of registered Burman consumers, and in Upper Burma, shops are located at places where there is a considerable non-Burman population addicted to the use of opium; there are, in fact, fifteen licensed shops in Upper Burma and nineteen in Lower Burma.

Persons found guilty of contravening the opium laws are subject to imprisonment or fine.

The following year the new law came into operation, and it is extremely interesting to read in the Report on the Administration of Burma during 1894–95, that owing to the severe restrictions put on the sale of opium, the amount sold from treasuries to licensed vendors fell from 44,670 to 11,593 seers. There is, doubtless, a considerable amount of illicit opium sold to meet the demand of non-Burmans, but the report states "The consumption of opium by Burmans has probably been materially reduced."

There are naturally great difficulties in working a law which so largely interferes with individual liberty, but as its object is to prevent the steady and inevitable degradation of the Burmese, and as it has the support of the conscience of the people, it will, it is hoped, be only necessary to persevere and enforce it for some years, to create a new habit, and to make the Burmans, even of Upper Burma, a more temperate people than they were in the days of the kings.

The same official report states that there was in 1894–95

a decrease in the consumption of alcoholic liquors in general, owing probably to the depression of trade consequent on the low paddy market. In Upper Burma there was in the year eight Burmans and two non-Burmans convicted for drunkenness, as against ten Burmans and twenty-one non-Burmans of the previous year. Three distilleries and one brewery are at work in Upper Burma. There is a universal consensus of opinion that indulgence in alcohol would be more destructive to the Burmans and more productive of crime than even opium. The utmost care should be taken to preserve the religious conscience of the people on this question of taking intoxicants, and not expose them to temptation, while remembering sadly the miseries and horrors drunkenness has brought on our own land. Burma sober will still be Burma happy, but Burma drunk will sink to the lowest depths of degradation.

It is, however, not sufficient for the Government to take note only of licensed shops, and to estimate the amount of opium and alcohol consumed by the excise returns. The exposed frontiers of Burma, towards China on one side, and Bengal on the other, give great facilities for smuggling opium. The want of due care in the past having given the opportunity for the introduction of a debasing habit, it is incumbent on the Government to exercise more than ordinary vigilance, and to see that, while repressive measures are enforced on the one hand, illicit trade and secret indulgence in vice are not allowed to flourish on the other. Anything also which tends to weaken the religious influence of the Buddhist monks is to be deprecated A religion which can only enforce its laws of morality when temptation is absent is feeble, but a religion which has such a fine moral code as that of Buddhism should receive all the support the Government can give it, so that it can the better impress the people and compel obedience to its laws. Even a conquered people have rights in their own country, and we have little doubt that if local option were

adopted, the vast majority of Burmans would vote against the introduction of opium dens, liquor shops, and distilleries into their country, for the use of strangers and to the degradation of their own youth. That the Government has at last earnestly taken the opium question in hand is a matter of sincere congratulation, but it must be remembered that opium is only one of the two demons of degradation, and that alcohol is the other, which must also be chained in Burma.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE CHRISTIAN KARENS

TO find a people without a written language and without a definite recognised religion, living for centuries within the boundaries and under the rule of a country so permeated with religion and so imbued with the love of poetry and the drama as the Burmese, cannot fail to be surprising and interesting. And yet this was the fact in the case of the Karens, a wild tribe who from time immemorial had inhabited the mountains on the borders, yet within the frontier, of Lower Burma. To account for their absence of a religious faith, the Karens have a tradition that at the beginning the Lord God called the different tribes to come and receive the law written on a buffalo hide, but that the Karens were so busy with the cares of husbandry that they forgot to obey the command, and hence were left without a religion.

The tribe is said to be of Aryan stock, and was probably in the country before the Burmans. They occupy different districts of Burma, separated often by large tracts of country. Thus the Karens are found in the mountain ranges of the Tenasserim peninsula, and in the valleys and fastnesses of the mountains which separate the Sitang and the Salwen rivers. To the north of Toungoo is found the race called the Red Karens, who are wilder and more untamable than the Karens of the south. A considerable body of Karens occupy the delta between Rangoon and Bassein, and the adjoining hills.

The first clear account of these people we receive from the

pen of Mrs. Emily Judson, the wife of the American Baptist missionary, who began evangelising work among the Karens in the first quarter of the present century. She says:—

"They are a rude, wandering race, drawing their principal support from the streams that flow through the valleys, and from the natural products of their native mountains. They migrate in small parties, and when they have found a favourable spot, fire the underbrush, and erect a cluster of three or four huts on the ashes. In the intervals of procuring food, the men have frequent occasion to hew out a canoe or weave a basket, and the women manufacture a kind of cotton cloth, which furnishes material for the clothing of the family. Here they remain until they have exhausted the resources of the surrounding forest, when they seek out another spot and repeat the same process.

"The Karens are a mild, peaceful race, simple and credulous, with many of the softer virtues and few flagrant vices. Though greatly addicted to drunkenness, extremely filthy and indolent in their habits, their morals, in other respects, are superior to many more civilised races. Their traditions, like those of several tribes of American Indians, are a curious medley of truth and absurdity; but they have some tolerably definite ideas of a Great Being who governs the universe, and many of their traditionary precepts bear a striking resemblance to those of the Gospel. They have various petty superstitions; but, with the exception of a small division, known to the Burmans as the Talaing Karens, and to the missionaries as Pwos or Shos, they have never adopted Buddhism; the oppressive treatment which they have received at the hands of their Burmese rulers probably contributing to increase their aversion to idolatry.[1]

"Soon after the arrival of the first Burmese missionary in Rangoon, his attention was attracted by small parties of strange,

[1] The missionaries are apt to speak of Buddhism with contempt as an idolatry.

wild-looking men, clad in unshapely garments, who from time to time straggled past his residence. He was told that they were called Karens; that they were more numerous than any similar tribe in the vicinity, and as untamable as the wild cow of the mountains. He was further told that they shrunk from association with other men, seldom entering a town except on compulsion; and that, therefore, any attempt to bring them within the sphere of his influence would prove unsuccessful. His earnest inquiries, however, awakened an interest in the minds of the Burmese converts, and one of them, finding during the war (the first Burmese war) a poor Karen bond-servant in Rangoon, paid his debt, and thus became, according to the custom of the country, his temporary master. When peace was restored, he was brought to the missionaries on the Tenasserim coast, and instructed in the principles of the Christian religion. He eventually became the subject of regenerating grace, and proved a faithful and efficient evangelist. Through this man, who will be recognised as Ko Thah-byoo, access was gained to others of his countrymen, and they listened with ready interest. They were naturally docile; they had no long-cherished prejudices and time-honoured customs to fetter them; and their traditions taught them to look for the arrival of white-faced foreigners from the West, who would make them acquainted with the true God.

"The missionaries, in their first communications with the Karens, were obliged to employ a Burmese interpreter, and notwithstanding the disadvantages under which they laboured, the truth spread with great rapidity. Soon, however, Messrs. Wade and Mason devoted themselves to the acquisition of the language, and the former conferred an inestimable blessing on the race by reducing it to writing. This gave a fresh impetus to the spread of Christianity. The wild men and women in their mountain homes found a new employment, and they entered upon it with enthusiastic avidity. They had

A VILLAGE ON THE SALWEN.

never before supposed their language capable of being represented by signs, like other languages; and they felt themselves from being a tribe of crushed, down-trodden slaves, suddenly elevated into a nation, with every facility for possessing a national literature. This had a tendency to check their roving propensities; and, under the protection of the British Government, they began to cultivate a few simple arts, though the most civilised among them still refuse to congregate in towns; and it is unusual to find a village that numbers more than five or six houses. Their first reading-books consisted of detached portions of the Gospel, and the Holy Spirit gave to the truth thus communicated regenerating power. Churches sprung up, dotting the wilderness like so many lighted tapers; and far back among the rocky fastnesses of the mountains, where foreign foot has never trod, the light is already kindled, and will continue to increase in brilliancy, till one of the darkest corners of the earth shall be completely illuminated."

The planting of the Christian religion, thus graphically described, among the wild and oppressed Karens, created a revolution in the condition of these people. They became quiet, orderly, and loyal subjects of the British crown, and in the period of great disorder which followed the annexation of Upper Burma, the Government found that they could depend upon the staunch loyalty of the Christian Karens. The heroic efforts made by Mr. Judson and other missionaries to carry the Gospel to a wild people occupying mountain fastnesses extremely difficult of access, were eventually rewarded by the formation of a church at every centre where the work of evangelisation was commenced, and there are now 480 Karen churches, with 28,200 members and an adherent population of 200,000.

The story of Judson's mission to the wild Karens of the mountains recalls that of St. Columba to convert the wild Picts of the Highlands of Scotland. Both missionaries were

filled with zeal unquenchable; both felt that the foundation of the religion of Christ among the uncivilised peoples was an object worthy of an evangelist, and both were engaged in their leisure in literary pursuits—St. Columba in transcribing the Gospels in an era when printing was unknown, and Judson in the translation of the Bible into the Burmese language.

One of the most notable facts in the evangelisation of the wild Karens is that the churches and schools which have been founded among them have been supported almost entirely by themselves, and that in no niggardly way. In 1856 the American Society resolved to withdraw their support from the Karen schools, upon which four or five of the most respected native converts voluntarily went into trade in Rangoon, a thing alien and unknown to all the former habits of the race, in order to devote half their earnings to the support of the schools. They faithfully performed their task, and contributed in about two years Rs.3000 to the schools.

The Bassein Sgau Karen Mission has had a quite remarkable success. It was founded in 1837 by Mr. Abbott, who was, however, able to spend only five or six days there. The work was continued and carried on by native converts, and in two years' time 2000 Karens had become Christians. Bassein was at that time under Burmese rule, and the new Church of the long-despised race had to endure the fire of persecution. The Karen Christians were beaten, chained, fined, imprisoned, sold as slaves, tortured, and put to death, but it is affirmed that not one apostatised. Mr. Abbott and his fellow-workers were forbidden to enter Bassein under pain of death; he removed to Sandoway in Arakan, which was British territory, and from there managed the Mission. On the annexation of Pegu, Bassein again became one of the headquarters of the American Baptist Mission. The success which has attended its labours is due to the energy and enterprise of the native converts; they first made their churches self-supporting,

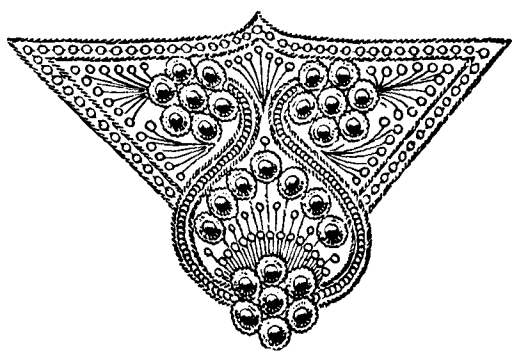
and then obliged the churches to support all the schools, "till in twelve years this people, steeped to the lips in poverty, expended in the building, supporting, and endowing of schools a sum equal to £27,000, besides building their chapels, supporting their pastors, their village schools, and their native missionaries,"[1] and the tribe who a generation before had not a written language, now determined not only to have schools, but to make them of the highest excellence. They subsequently founded the High School in Bassein, which is said to be "the best in all Burma," and endowed it with £10,000. Here are between 400 and 500 students of both sexes. The Karens also control a printing-office, a sawmill, and machine-shop, and run a newspaper, called the *Karen National News*. They built a Memorial Hall in memory of the first native missionary, Ko Thah-byoo, and have now added a hospital to their various philanthropic undertakings. "It is said that the discipline of the Karen churches is strict, their pastors are well and thoroughly trained; their benevolence is maintained on a system which reaches every member, and in their dress, furniture, domestic life, and social condition, they compare favourably with members of the country churches in Christian lands."[2]

"Mr. Winston, the American Baptist missionary now in Burma, adds his testimony to that quoted above, and says: "I have known intimately in Upper Burma for years Karens doing well in different walks of life—in the medical profession, as teachers, as clerks in Government offices, and as surveyors—who are as devout, upright, and consistent members of the Christian Church as are to be found anywhere. I have sat and listened in Upper Burma with wonder and admiration to a concert consisting of classical English music, anthems, glees, choruses and solos, rendered by Karen young men and maidens

[1] "Encyclopædia of Missions," quoted by Winston. [2] Ibid.

from the High School at Bassein, that would have afforded the greatest delight to any English audience."

The Karen women are gentle in manner and modest in conduct. I was told at the Dufferin Hospital for Women at Rangoon that they are very teachable, and make excellent nurses, and that they have more steadfastness of purpose than the Burmese women. Their dress resembles that of their Burmese sisters; the same narrow tamein or skirt is worn, but the colours selected are generally quieter than are the vogue in Burma proper. Instead of a white jacket, the Karen girl wears a jacket of dark cloth with short sleeves, which is prettily decorated with coloured embroidery and braids, and sometimes with sequins and spangles.



CHAPTER XXIV

THE SHANS, KACHINS, CHINS, AND OTHER RACES

THE Shan States border Burma on the north and the east; for many centuries they were tributary to the Burmese crown. The Shans have a tradition that in the remote past they were a strong nation with splendid cities in their midst. After the fall of Pagahn the Shan princes exercised great power in Burma; the city and kingdom of Sagaing were founded by Shans, and for some time kings of Shan birth reigned both in Ava and Pegu.

The city of Timplan, to which the great King of Pegu, Bareng Naung, sent his ambassador, in whose retinue was Mendez Pinto, the Portuguese traveller, was probably situated in Zimmé, a Shan state now tributary to Siam. This city, which is described with minuteness by Pinto, was ruled over by a tyrant called the Calaminham, who lived in great state and magnificence. "Timplan," says our author, "is seated along by a great river named Pituy, and is environed all about with two broad walls of earth, made up with strong stone on either side, having broad ditches, and at each gate a castle with high towers; certain merchants affirmed unto us that their city had within it some four hundred thousand fires; and albeit the houses are for the most part not above two stories high, yet in recompense thereof they are built very stately, and with great charge, especially those of the nobility and of the merchants, not speaking of the great lords, which are separated by great enclosures where are spacious outward courts, and at the entering into them arches after the

manner of China, as also gardens and walks planted with trees, and great ponds, all very handsomely accommodated with pleasures and delights of this life, whereunto these people are very much inclined. We were also certified that both within the enclosure of the city and a league about it, there were six-and-twenty hundred pagodas, some of which, wherein we had been, were very sumptuous and rich; indeed (for the rest), the most of them were petty houses in the fashion of hermitages." It is stated that there were four-and-twenty religious sects, and that the priests dressed in yellow as in Burma. "The women are ordinarily very white and fair, but that which most commends them is, that they are of a good nature, chaste, charitable, and much inclined to compassion."

"The court of the Calaminham is very rich, the nobility exceeding gallant, and the reverence of the lords and princes very great. The king is feared and respected in a marvellous manner; he hath in his court many commanders that are strangers, unto whom he giveth great pensions to serve him for the safety of his person. . . . The gentlemen of the country live very handsomely, and are served in vessels of silver, and sometimes of gold; but as for the common people, they use porcelain and lattin. In summer they are apparelled in satin, damask, and wrought taffeties which come from Persia, and in winter in gowns furred with matterns." Much more is told by Pinto of the city of Timplan, of the "very antique buildings, rich and sumptuous temples, very fair gardens, houses and castles that were all along the side of the river;" of the hospital in which to lodge pilgrims, called the Prison of the gods; of the elephants harnessed with gold, and the thousands of horses with trappings of silver and silk; of the bells which were struck every quarter of an hour to give the time to the people; of the silk banners and gorgeous coverings, and of the King's guard of honour, "composed of a thousand men, who were all in gilt arms, their swords by

their sides, and on their heads helmets wrought with gold and silver, wherein stuck gallant plumes of several colours;" and of the "great bridge that was in the form of a street, railed on either side with ballisters of lattin, and beautified with many arches curiously wrought, upon which were scutcheons of arms, charged with several devices of gold, and the crests over them were silver globes, five spans in circumference, all very stately and majestical to behold."

That the people of Timplan understood the art of enjoying life, the following shows: "We past along through the midst of a great garden, made with such art, and where appeared so many goodly things, so divers and so pleasing to the eye, as words are not able to express them; for there were many alleys environed with ballisters of silver, and many arbors of extraordinary scent, which we were told had so much sympathy with the moons of the year, that in all seasons whatsoever they bare flowers and fruits; with all there was much abundance and variety of roses and other flowers, as almost passeth belief. In the midst of this garden we saw a great many young women, very fair and well clad, whereof some passed away their time in dancing, and others in playing sundry sorts of instruments, much after our manner, which they performed with so much harmony, as we were not a little delighted therewith; some also bestowed themselves in making of curious needle-works and gold-strings, some in other things, whilst their companions gathered fruit to eat, and all this was done so quietly, and with such order and good behaviour, as made us admire it."

The great Calaminham on his throne is thus described: "Through this antechamber we came to a door, where there were six gentlemen ushers with silver maces, by which we entered into another room very richly furnished: in this was the Calaminham seated on a most majestical throne, encompassed with three rows of ballisters of silver; at the foot of the degrees

of his throne sate twelve women that were exceeding beautiful, and most richly apparelled, playing on divers sorts of instruments, whereunto they accorded their voices; on the top of the throne, and not far from his person, were twelve young damsels about nine or ten years old, all of them on their knees round about him, and carrying maces of gold in the fashion of sceptres; amongst them there was also another that stood on her feet and fanned him. Below, all along the length of the room, were a great many old men, wearing mitres of gold on their heads, and long robes of satin and damask, curiously embroidered, every one having silver maces on their shoulders, and ranked in order on either side against the walls: over all the rest of the room were sitting upon rich Persian carpets about two hundred young ladies, as we could guess, that were wonderful fair and exceeding well favoured."

Then follows an account of the reverence with which the Calaminham was addressed, and how he was assured that "the clouds of the air, which recreate the fruits whereof we eat, have published over the whole monarchy of the world the great majesty of his power," and how the beautiful young damsels and children danced before him and enacted a comedy.

The Calaminham styled himself "the absolute Lord of the indomitable force of the Elephants of the Earth," and indeed, says Pinto, "I do not think that in all the world there is a greater lord than he."[1]

Traditions of former greatness and the faded semblance of state and magnificence are still treasured by the Tsaubwas or princes of the Shan states. They imitate the ways of Burmese royalty. They marry their half-sisters to preserve the purity of the royal blood; they have a plurality of wives, also Atwen-woons and officers of state; they dwell under a

[1] The site of this great city is not now known, and much doubt has been thrown on Pinto's narrative.

seven-storied roof, and have a white umbrella borne over them when they go abroad. The Tsaubwas are generally men of refined appearance, and often of high character; their rule is mild and paternal. The Tsaubwa of Kiang-Tung was described by Captain Macleod, who first visited and described the Shan States in 1837, as a man of noble and gentle bearing.

A SHAN TSAUBWA IN COURT DRESS.

Whatever may have been the origin or the former greatness of the Shan people, they seem to have had no national adhesion, and by forming a number of independent states, constantly at war with one another, they fell under the power of, and became tributary to, one of the three strong nations on their borders, China, Burma, or Siam. The Shans subject to China seem to have been content, and bear testimony to the justice and good faith of their masters, but the Shans tributary to Ava detested the rule of Burma. When Burma was annexed these States became tributary to the British Government.

It is in the partial administration of semi-civilised native

states, which are allowed to retain their independence, that the peculiar genius of the British people to govern, and to teach the arts of government, is particularly shown. A British official has been appointed as superintendent in each southern and northern division of the Shan States; all tribal disputes are referred to him for arbitration; fighting between states is forbidden, and they are not allowed to enter into relations with any foreign power. The chieftains receive in return our protection and are aided in the task of government. Import duties on goods passing into Burma have been abolished; roads are being made by the British Government at their expense, and improvements are being introduced into agriculture and the breed of sheep and cattle. No written law existed in Shan-land, hence the introduction of a system of justice and good government has been unusually difficult; but the Tsaubwas show a willingness to learn which is encouraging.

A SHAN WARRIOR.

The Shans are born traders and keen farmers, and the British Government is looking a good deal to the stimulation of trade among them, and the inducements which the rich unpopulated land of Burma offers, for the settlement of Shans in the

lowlands, and the development of the country by means of

A SHAN BEAUTY.

this busy, hardy, and tractable people. Everywhere in Burma

the Shan trader is to be seen; dressed in full blue trousers, loose jacket, immense flapping sun-hat, and with a square bag gaily embroidered with red silks and white cowries always hanging from one shoulder, he is engaged in either buying or selling, or in packing his multitudinous bundles into carts drawn by mild-eyed white buffaloes.

The Shans are Buddhists in religion, and have phongyees and kioungs as in Burma. Their women are also free and respected.

The Kachins.

A very different people to the Shans are their neighbours the Kachins, who occupy the mountainous tracts of country between the Shan States and Yunnan. They build their villages on the topmost peaks or high ridges of the mountains, and they live, not by honest labour, but by "lifting" cattle, looting caravans, and by stealing everything on which they can lay their hands. They cultivate for their own consumption a little rice, opium, and vegetables. The Kachins live in barrack-like houses, sixty to eighty yards long, raised on piles about four feet from the ground, with thatched roofs, which descend close to the ground to prevent their being blown away in the storms. In the middle of the house is one long room, off which the sleeping apartments are partitioned. Several families live in one house, and the cattle, pigs, dogs, and fowls are domiciled in the space below the floor. The fireplace is merely an open brick hearth, and as there are no windows or chimneys, these barracks are by no means model dwellings. A long avenue lined with bamboo posts leads to a Kachin village. Each village has its headman or chief, who demands and receives implicit obedience.

The Kachins have no religion beyond the worship of Nats, of whom they stand in great dread, and consequently try to conciliate. In the avenue leading to a village, various offerings

are hung to propitiate the Nats, and at births, deaths, and

A KACHIN WOMAN.

marriages, guns are fired to frighten away evil spirits. The weapons of the Kachins are guns made by themselves, dahs

or daggers, and crossbows. The latter are formed of bamboo and are very strong, and they can shoot with great force and accuracy up to 50 or 60 yards. Poisoned arrows are sometimes used. A spirit is distilled from rice, with which the Kachins make themselves drunk on important occasions. They have no writing, to account for which there is a legend that at the beginning of the world the Nats imparted to the different nations the knowledge of writing, but the information was given the Kachins written on a hide, which they ate, and were thus left without any knowledge of the alphabet.[1]

A KACHIN.

The men and women dress so much alike that it is often difficult to distinguish them. The legs are swathed with coloured cloth bandages, or are encased in embroidered gaiters. A short shirt, which is often very tastefully woven and embroidered, falls to the knees. A cloth jacket covers the body, and round the loins are carried an enormous number of fine rattan rings. I did not succeed in ascertaining the origin or meaning of the custom. On the head is worn an immense turban of dark blue cloth, on the top of which a great straw sun-hat is often placed. The stuffs worn by the Kachins are very ingeniously made. They are woven in simple designs

[1] Report of Lieutenant Rigby on a tour through the Northern Shan States.

in coloured threads on a low loom placed near the ground; an elaborate pattern is afterwards worked in with the needle in silks. Charming examples of Kachin embroideries in silks, coloured straws and cowries can be got from a Chinaman in the bazaar at Bhamo.

The confidence of the Kachins has still to be won, and it is hoped that by offering them security to trade, they may be induced to become loyal subjects and less truculent neighbours. Mr. Scott is of opinion that they can be reclaimed by kind treatment, and "that it is not at all impossible that in time we may eventually form them into as good military policemen, or even soldiers, as the Goorkhas of Nepaul."[1]

THE CHINS.

The wild Chins occupy the mountains which rise between Arakan and Burma, and they extend as far north as Manipur. Recent military expeditions into the country of the Chins, to put down raids into the lowlands, and to exact tribute and obedience from the chiefs, have made us better acquainted with this wild and primitive people. The men are tall, strong, and muscular; the women of some tribes disfigure their faces by having lines and dots tattooed all over them. Costume is of the scantiest; with the men it consists of a small loin-cloth and a blanket thrown over the shoulders; a hairy haversack is worn on the right side. The women wear a dark cloth skirt and jacket. A chief is distinguished by a plume of feathers worn in a turban. Washing the body is not much practised. The houses are substantial structures, the walls being made of stout planks cut from large fir-trees in the forest; the floor is raised on posts a few feet from the ground, and the roof is made of thick thatch.

[1] "Burma," by James George Scott (Shway Yoe).

There is a courtyard or platform in front of every house, which consists generally of three rooms. The first is the public room, and is adorned with the skulls of wild animals and other trophies of hunting; a round hole about two feet from the ground leads to the second room, which is quite dark; another hole in the wall conducts to a third room beyond, which has a door. Beneath the floor are kept the cattle and pigs; the latter are effective scavengers, the Chin villages being described as very clean and free from bad smells. They are generally built on the side of a hill where there is a good spring or stream, the water from which is conveyed by bamboo pipes to wooden troughs at each house. The chief's house is distinguished from the rest by its superior size and construction.

AN EMBROIDERED KACHIN BAG.

The Chins have no religion beyond the propitiation of Nats, in consulting whom they make use of omens. The marriage ceremony is extremely simple, and consists merely in the public giving of the girl to the man to wife, after which a cock is sacrificed. In some tribes young men are not allowed to marry till they are twenty-five years old; marriage is respected and morality is said to be strict. The chiefs are implicitly followed and obeyed, and the ceremony of *thissa* or swearing friendship ensures absolute fidelity. Drunkenness is the great vice of the people, and they take every opportunity of becoming intoxicated on a small beer

made from millet, which is rendered more alcoholic by the addition of a strong spirit distilled from the same grain.

There is no written language and no system of government among these people; the verbal mandates of the chieftains are the only laws they know. They used to be constantly engaged in making raids into the lowlands, and in carrying off cattle and loot as well as Burmese women and children, who were kept as slaves, but do not seem to have been treated unkindly. To liberate these captives, to prevent raids, and to bring ourselves into touch with the wild tribes who have now come under our Government, military expeditions have been made into the Chin hills, with the result that good roads have been carried into the heart of the country, and the chiefs have given in their submission and have agreed to pay tribute. The Chins have now learnt that they have nothing to fear and everything to gain from friendly relations with us, and it is hoped that the country, once opened up and pacified, the Chins, who are a people of unusual intelligence, will become civilised and educated as rapidly as have the Karens.

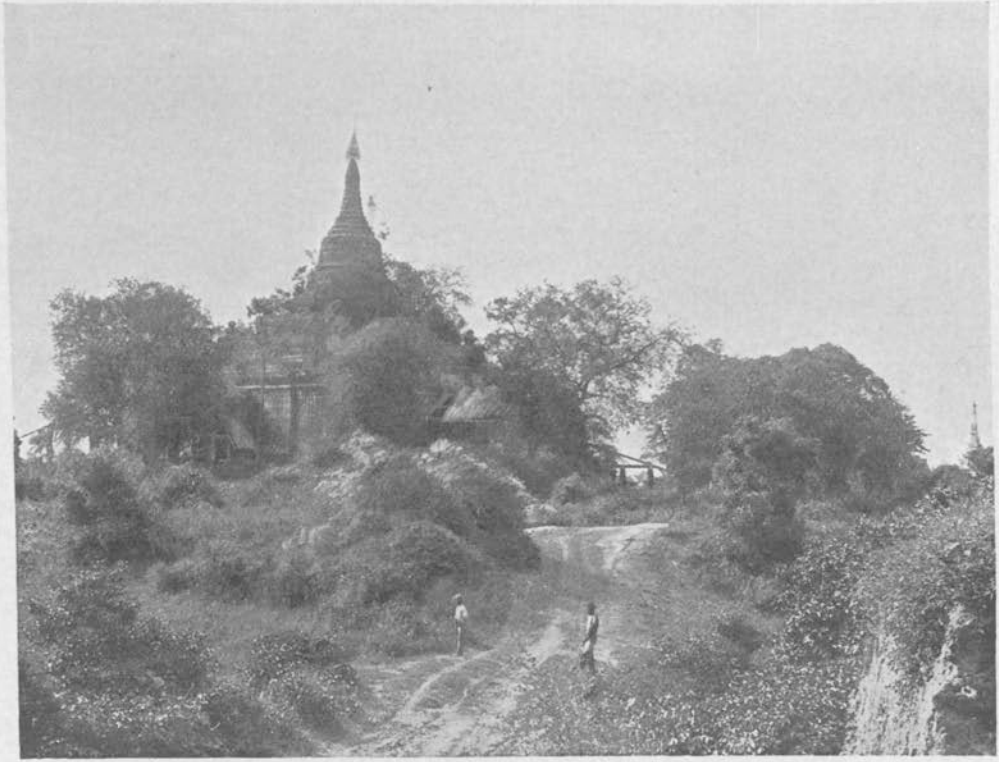
The Chinese in Burma.

John Chinaman, who has now free access to Burma across the mountain passes by way of Bhamo, and also to the south from Singapore, has not been long in discovering that, under the strong and just rule of the English, the country offers great opportunities for trade. There are now no less than 40,000 Chinamen in Burma, and they are among the most busy and enterprising immigrants there. If a good brick house is observed from among the trees on the banks of the Irrawaddy far up the river, and one asks whose it is, the reply will probably be, "Oh, that belongs to a Chinaman, who is making a fortune by importing and selling Swiss milk;" and if in the jungle near the river one is startled by hearing the burr of

a steam-engine and the whizz of a circular saw, one is sure to find a factory worked entirely by Chinamen, at which sleepers are being prepared for the new railway, or blocks of fuel for the steamers. Great was the delight of the Chinese workmen, on one of these occasions, to discover that I was wearing a silver waist-belt bought in Hong-Kong, which had the good wish for long life embossed in Chinese characters on the buckle. For a Chinaman, wherever he may be, is still a Chinaman, and carries his pig-tail, his religion, and his opium-smoking habits with him, as well as his industry, his patience, his placid temper, his devotion to his parents, and his love of children. He thus becomes a very acceptable husband to the independent, active Burmese woman; and as Chinese immigrants almost always arrive alone, without their womankind, marriages between Chinese and Burmese women are rather frequent, and prove highly satisfactory. The nationalities of the parents are preserved in the offspring, for the girls are brought up as Burmese, with the costume, ideas, and religion of their mother, while the boys are brought up as Chinese, and wear the pig-tail and national dress. A mixed race, with the best characteristics of both, is thus produced, which must have good results in Burma, where the great need is an industrious, permanent population, who will reclaim and develop a country abounding in natural wealth.

In Bhamo, the frontier town, the Chinese are in force, and carry on an extensive trade. They have here a prosperous bazaar and a very handsomely decorated Joss-house. In the mountains between Bhamo and Yunnan, and in the northern Shan states, there are a number of Chinese villages, where the people are chiefly occupied in cultivating opium. They are very dirty, and somewhat nomadic in their habits.

In Mandalay the Chinese settlers are numerous, and own most of the brick houses to be seen in that city. I was present at a public dinner given in Mandalay by the Chinese



OUTSIDE BHAMO.

merchants to the English officials, on the occasion of the Chinese New Year, at which it was evident that they occupied positions of wealth and influence.

The Madrassees.

It was hoped at one time that there would be an extensive emigration from India to Burma; but the Hindus' dread of crossing "the black water," the objection they make to their women leaving India, and their rigid caste rules, all militated against the scheme of colonising Burma from India. It is true that the Bengali Baboo is to be found in the Government offices, that domestic servants, cab-drivers, tradesmen, &c., are to a large extent Indian Mohammedans, and that the coolies hail chiefly from Chittagong and Coringa; but still, emigrants from India have not come in the numbers which were anticipated, once that the country was opened up and pacified. The principal settlers from India are the Hindu Chetties from the Madras Presidency. "They are a remarkable class of people, very wealthy, very keen at business, men of their word in all transactions, being fully alive to the value of keeping their credit by an unstained reputation in finance; and if any firm of their community finds it difficult to make their payments, the rest of the Chetty firms will usually come to their help, to save the reputation of the whole. Yet with all this, they dress, eat, and live as if they had a very meagre income, and have the appearance of mere savages. The vast amount of naked skin they show is almost black in complexion, and they have almost no education beyond the bare necessities of finance. Their food is of the simplest; their houses, all on the two sides of one street to be near each other, are substantially built to protect them from thieves, but almost devoid of all furniture. They are not negligent of religion, for as soon as they came

(after the annexation), they secured land and built a Hindu temple. Their dress, consisting of two pieces of thin white cotton, one round the waist, and the other loosely thrown over the shoulders, could be bought for three-and-sixpence; the closely shaven head has no covering and the feet none."[1] The pleasure-loving Burman, to whom the possession of a little money means enjoyment for himself and his friends, and to whom beautiful clothes, laughter, and leisure are the necessities of existence, has fallen completely into the power of the naked, grasping, usurious Madrassee Chetty, whose passion is to possess without his having the capacity to enjoy. In every village will be found the Madrassee money-lender, and before the paddy crop is planted it is often sold, and the Burmese farmer plunged into the morass of irretrievable debt.

Other Races.

Eurasians there are, of course, in Burma, as elsewhere in the East; an unhappy race, suspended as it were midway between heaven and hell, and whose proper place is not to be found on earth. When Sir A. Mackenzie was Chief Commissioner, he denounced publicly, with no uncertain voice, the irregular relations openly established between English soldiers and Burmese women. The missionaries so deeply deplore the immoral lives of the Christians, whose religion they teach as one of purity and high morality, that Mr. and Mrs. Winston will not teach English to the orphan girls in their home in Mandalay, as to do so is, they aver, to seal their fate. On this subject English ladies have much in their own hands. At present an Englishman who honourably marries a Burmese woman, or an Englishwoman who marries a Burman, are tabooed in society; while irregular relations are winked at,

[1] Winston, "Four Years in Upper Burma."

if not countenanced, and the unhappy Eurasian offspring of such are ostracised, whatever may be the position they subsequently attain to by education and force of character. If English ladies would, on the contrary, ostracise the men who outrage morality and openly dishonour their country and religion, and give support to those who act honourably and receive their native wives, and would, by extending the hand of sympathy to Eurasians, compensate for the evil done, we should begin to see happier relations established between the white and native races, and some more practical results of Christian teaching.

Parsees are in Burma, as elsewhere, prosperous and respected, as are also the Armenians, who are chiefly engaged in trade. The Suratees and Marwarees from India are keen business men. The Kathays or Manipurians, descendants of captives from Manipur, retain their own language and religion, and are chiefly engaged in the industry of silk-weaving. From Manipur also came the Brahmin soothsayers and astrologers who direct the affairs of life of the Burman.

The Hill Tribes.

Besides the Karens, Chins, and Kachins, already spoken of, there are to be found in the mountains stretching between Arakan and Manipur on the one side, and between Toungo and Yunnan on the other, a number of tribes, many of whom are very interesting, and whose customs and ideas are worthy of study and investigation. A better knowledge of these tribes is now being obtained by means of the Boundary Commission, and the various military missions sent into the mountains on the frontier.

The Lethtas, inhabiting a country north-west of Mobyay, are described by Mr. E. O'Riley as having so high an appreciation of purity of life, that the young men and young women are domiciled in two long houses at opposite ends of the village,

and when they have occasion to pass each other, they avert their gaze, so that they may not see each other's faces. They have also such a keen sense of shame, that if accused of an evil act by the community, the accused person retires to a secluded spot, there digs his grave, and strangles himself.

The villages of the Toung-thoos are scattered along the banks of the Salwen and Sittang, and in the Shan states as far as Moné. They are a bold, predatory people, and claim to be the original race in Burma, before the advent of the Burmese from the north, and that the city of Thatun (destroyed in the fifth century) was their ancient capital. It has been argued that this tribe, as well as the Karens, are descendants of the Tanjous or Huns, who are stated in Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" to have retired south, and obtained under the title of Tanjou a convenient territory on the verge of the Chinese Empire.

The Palaungs are found in the northern Shan states and on the lower slopes of the hills of the valley of the Salwen, and are chiefly engaged in cultivating paddy, tobacco, and maize.

BOOK III.

THE RELIGION OF THE BURMANS

CHAPTER XXV

GAUTAUMA BUDDHA, THE TEACHER OF THE PERFECT LAW

THE religious belief of three hundred millions of the human race is entitled at least to respect. The more we examine the life and teaching of the great founder of Buddhism, the more profoundly must we be impressed with the strength and vitality of a religion which exacts from its devotees absolute purity of life, in climes where passion runs riot, and self-abnegation in countries where self-indulgence is a temptation. The more remarkable do we find this religion of one-fourth of the human race, when we realise the fact that while its creed is positive atheism, it teaches that by righteousness alone man can deliver himself from the vain shows of repeated existences and reach the absolute calm of the self-less, passionless spirit.

That Burma is permeated with Buddhism is apparent to everybody, and no description of this unique country and its inhabitants would be complete without some account of the great Teacher whose statue is to be seen everywhere, and whose precepts and commandments the Burmese are never tired of repeating.

He who is now known as Gautauma Buddha is said by the Burmese to have been the fourth of a series of Buddhas, who at intervals of 5000 years have appeared on earth to teach men the perfect law. Through a long series of previous existences, as animal, man, and Nat, Gautauma had practised virtue, and had walked in the way of righteousness, till destined in his last incarnation, as son of the King Thoodaudana, and

his wife, the beautiful and virtuous Maia, to become Buddha. The celestial infant was born under an Engyin tree in the country of Dewah. Immediately after his birth he stood, it is averred, on his feet, and, gazing as it were over the world, he exclaimed in a loud voice, "This is my last birth. There shall be for me no other state of existence: I am the greatest of all beings." Marvels and miracles accompanied the birth of the wondrous child. Seven days after his birth his mother died and became a Nat. King Thoodaudana was told by eight learned Pounhas that his son was destined to be a Rahan, and that the four things which would determine him to become a Religious were the sight of an old man, a sick man, a dead man, and a recluse. The king, who desired to see his gifted son, the Prince Theiddat, a great monarch, gave orders that these omens should be carefully kept from him, and the young Gautauma was brought up amidst all the pleasures and luxuries of his father's court. At the age of sixteen three fine palaces were built for his enjoyment, and married to the beautiful Yathaudara, his first cousin, he passed the time surrounded by maidens, who beguiled the hours with music and dancing. He went from one palace to the other in a circle of ever-renewed pleasures and amusements.

One day the prince was driving to his garden to enjoy some sports, when he met an old man, whose bent body, shrivelled skin, and grey hair proclaimed his decrepitude and weakness. "What is that man?" cried the prince to his driver, who explained that he was simply an individual who had reached old age, a condition of infirmity to which all would come, if they lived long enough. "What!" cried the terrified prince, "birth is then indeed a great evil, ushering all beings into a wretched condition, which must be inevitably attended with the dispiriting infirmities of old age." He returned to the palace determined to forsake the world and become a Rahan. His father was so dismayed at this decision that he

increased the number of dancing girls in the palace and added to the guard outside. But it was all to no effect; on different occasions the prince saw the fateful omens, a sick man sinking under the weight of the most loathsome disease, a putrefying corpse, and then the meek form of a Rahan.

Gautauma was plunged into the deepest meditation, and slowly realising the fact that the shows and pleasures of life were false, he determined to leave his palace and retire into a solitary place. While considering this resolution, news was brought that a son had been born to him, on which he remarked, "That child is a new and strong tie which I shall have to break." The same evening beautiful dancing girls tried to distract his attention and stir his senses, but, regardless of them, he fell asleep. They followed his example. At midnight the prince awoke, and seeing the prostrate forms of the dancing girls lying in unseemly attitudes, he felt such a strong disgust for all the sensual pleasures of his court, that he determined to quit it at once and seek peace and holiness as an ascetic. He gave orders for his favourite horse, Kantika, to be harnessed. For a moment he hesitated; he longed to see his new-born son. He gently opened the door of the room where the princess was sleeping with one of her hands placed over the head of the infant. Gautauma stopped at the threshold and said to himself, "If I go farther to contemplate the child, I will have to remove the hand of the mother; she may be awakened by this movement, and then she will prove a great obstacle to my departure. I will see the child after having become a Buddha." He then quickly shut the door and left the palace. Immediately he had passed the gates of the royal city, he was met by the evil tempter Manh Nat, who promised him a great kingdom if he would return to the palace, but Gautauma declared anew his intention of forsaking the world. Accompanied by his faithful Tsanda and riding his horse Kantika, he took a straight course before him, and even resisted the desire

to look back regretfully on the beautiful city he had left. He arrived at last at the river Anauma. Here he divested himself of his royal robes, cut off his long hair and beard, and being miraculously provided with the dress patta (alms-bowl), girdle, and filter of a Rahan, he directed his attendant to return to the palace with his dress and horse. But the faithful Kantika, learning that he would see his master no more in this world, "his sorrow grew so great that his heart split into two parts, and he died on the spot."

Gautauma began at once to lead the life of a mendicant recluse, and on arrival at the city of Radzagio he took his patta and begged from door to door. Having obtained enough rice and vegetables for a meal, he retired outside the city and tried to eat the coarse food. Accustomed to eat the most delicate things, he turned against the unsavoury mess. Determined, however, to conquer nature's appetites, he reproached himself for his weakness, and taking up the patta, cheerfully ate the food, and never afterwards felt any repugnance for anything he had to eat.

Gautauma then sought the society of certain Rahans or hermits, and learnt from them all they had to teach; but concluding that the knowledge he had acquired was not sufficient to enable him to obtain the dignity of a Buddha, he resolved to devote himself to meditation on the instability and nothingness of all that exists. To carry out this purpose he repaired to the solitude of Oorouwela, where he spent all his time in the deepest meditation. Five Rahans were so impressed by his penitential deeds that they remained with him to render him all such needful services as sweeping, cooking rice, &c. For six years Gautauma was engaged in meditation, and at the end of that time he undertook a great fast, which was so severe that his face became black and he fainted from weakness. Gautauma then came to the conclusion that fasting and mortification were not works of sufficient value to enable him

to attain to the holiness of the Buddhaship. He therefore took his patta and went forth again among men to beg for his food, at which the five Rahans who had served and tended him were so disgusted that they left him.

At this time Thoodzata, the daughter of a rich man in the village of Thena, determined to make an offering of specially prepared rich milk to the guardian Nat, in gratitude for her having borne her husband a male child. The milk, which was the product of specially fed cows, having been boiled, she carried it in a golden bowl to the gniaong tree under which Gautauma was sitting, and mistook him for a Nat. Gautauma accepted the offering, and after bathing in the river, divided the milk into forty-nine mouthfuls, which he took. On a throne miraculously provided he then took his seat in a cross-legged position, firmly determined never to vacate it till he became a Buddha. The spirits of evil brought all their forces against him, but they were discomfited and fled, and Buddha continued to meditate profoundly upon the ten great merits, and the laws of cause and effect, in order to account for all that is in existence. By profound reasoning he arrived at the knowledge of the cause of evil and misery and the means of deliverance, and discovered the four ways that inevitably lead men and Nats to Nirvana. Whilst these thoughts thronged through his mind, a little before break of day, in the 103rd year of the Eatzana era, on the day of the full moon of Katson, the perfect science broke at once upon him, and he became the Buddha. Innumerable wonders and miracles proclaimed the great event when Gautauma at last obtained the fulness of the Buddhaship. "After this glorious and triumphant achievement Buddha continued," says the ancient chronicle,[1] "to remain for seven days on the throne in a cross-legged position, with his mind absorbed in contemplation. Mental exertion and labour were, however, at an end, for the

[1] Bigandet's "Life of Gautauma."

absolute Truth was revealed to him. From a centre of light Buddha saw all beings entangled in the web of passion, tossed on the raging billows of the sea of renewed existences, whirling in the vortex of endless miseries, tormented incessantly, and wounded to the quick by the sting of concupiscence; sunk into the dark abyss of ignorance, the wretched victims of an illusory, unsubstantial, and unreal world. He said, then, to himself: "In all the world there is no one but I who know how to break through the web of the passions, to still the waves that waft beings from one state into another, to save them from the whirlpool of miseries, to put an end to concupiscence and break its sting, to dispel the mist of ignorance by the light of truth, to teach all intelligent beings the unreality and non-existence of this world, and thereby lead them to the true state of Nirvana."

For forty-nine days Buddha remained in meditation under the bodi tree, and in that time arrived at perfect knowledge by contemplating pure truth. The evil spirits sent three beautiful women to distract and tempt him, but he sent them away, saying he had conquered the flesh.

When the great fast was over and Gautauma had obtained the Buddhaship and the supreme height of wisdom and knowledge, he was assailed by another temptation. "Knowledge," he said, "of the law and of the four great truths, which I alone possess, is very hard to gain. The law is deep; it is difficult to know and understand; it is very sublime, and can only be comprehended by means of earnest meditation. It is sweet, filling the soul with joy, and accessible but to the wise. Now all beings are sunk very low by the influence of the five great passions; they cannot free themselves from their baneful operation, which is the source of all unstability. This law is hard to be understood. If I ever preach that law, beings will not be able to understand me, and from my preaching there will result but a useless fatigue and unprofitable weariness."

Having gained the truth, he felt indisposed to impart it; whereupon the chief of the Brahmas (one of the superior Nats) left his seat in the heavens, and descending to earth, represented to Buddha that not all mankind were buried under the weight and filth of the passions, and that there were an immense number of beings who would understand the law. As he pleaded, Buddha felt a tender compassion for all beings rise in his soul, and he made a faithful promise to the good spirit that he would preach his law to all beings.

From this time forth till the end of his life, a period of forty-five years, Buddha was incessantly engaged in preaching and teaching the perfect law and the way of deliverance. He preached to all indiscriminately, learned and ignorant, the great and the lowly, men and women, old and young. Having made a certain number of disciples, he sent them out in different directions, saying, "Go ye now and preach the most excellent law, expounding every point thereof, and unfolding it with care and attention in all its bearings and particulars. Explain the beginning, the middle, and the end of the law to all men, without exception; let everything respecting it be made publicly known and brought to the broad daylight. Show now to men and Nats the way leading to the practice of pure and meritorious works." It was this socialistic catholicity of teaching which afterwards brought on the Buddhists the hatred of the Brahmins.

Though the doctrine preached by Buddha was austere and self-denying, we are told that crowds of converts poured in daily from all parts into the presence of the master, anxious to receive from his hands the much-longed-for dignity of Rahan or recluse.

Accompanied by thousands of followers, Buddha was received with honour wherever he went. In the rainy season or Buddhist Lent, he retired to some forest solitude, where monasteries were built by wealthy men for the accommodation of himself and his disciples. It was during these periods of

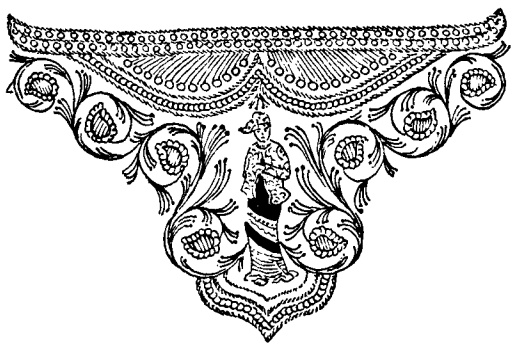
enforced retirement, owing to the difficulties of travelling during the rains, that he taught his disciples the more abstruse doctrines of his religion, and trained them by disciplinary regulations to subdue their passions and estrange themselves from the world and its attractions. We are told that during Lent Buddha passed his day in the monastery thus: he rose at daybreak, washed and dressed, and retired for a short time to consider the work of the day and the needs of the people; then taking his patta under his arm, he sallied forth to beg for his food, and he preached to those who showed him charity. On his return to the monastery, he washed his feet, admonished his disciples, and gave them subjects of meditation and exercises to perform. He then took his meal and retired to his private apartment. At midday he rose and went out, and preached to all who had come from afar to hear him. After the people had departed, he bathed and took a walk in the open verandah. His mat and cushion were spread in an open place, and the Rahans came and explained to him their difficulties, asked questions, and received answers. When night fell the disciples retired from their master's presence, and the Nats and other celestial beings were admitted and remained with him till midnight. Buddha then walked for a while to relieve his limbs from extreme weariness, and went to his apartment to take some rest. The other nine months of the year he travelled incessantly, teaching, preaching, and making converts wherever he went.—"Lay aside your passions, control your anger, love one another, and live in peace," was the burden of his teaching. A Master so gentle in manner, so mild in remonstrance, so pure in life, and so wise in instruction was of course adored by his disciples; the chief among these was Ananda, to whom was entrusted the honour of giving personal service to Buddha. He is described as a peculiarly gentle and amiable character, and he was Buddha's faithful friend and servant to the end.

COLOSSAL STATUE OF THE DYING BUDDHA SURROUNDED WITH VOTIVE OFFERINGS.

Buddha's life was not, however, without difficulties and trials. At one time he was falsely accused by a woman of light character, a trial he took with meekness, as he explained it was a punishment for a sin he had committed in a former existence; at another time his disciples quarrelled so much among themselves on a question of doctrine that he had to separate himself from them for a while to enjoy peace. His cousin Dewadat also tried to split the young church by schism. Whatever were his trials, Buddha preserved a perfectly calm mind and placid manner, his one absorbing aim being to save mankind from the thraldom of their passions and the miseries of their changeable existence by teaching them the perfect law and the way of peace.

Travelling on foot from place to place, preaching and making converts, with a heart filled with a great compassion, Buddha passed his long life. At the age of eighty, and knowing that the time of his deliverance from this life was near, he proceeded to the city of Wethalie, where, in the great Gnyipoora Hall, Ananda assembled the Rahans, whom Buddha addressed for the last time. He urged them to be zealous propagators of his religion, and foretold that in three months he would pass to Nirvana; whither his two greatest disciples, Thariputra and Maukalan, had preceded him by a few months. Notwithstanding his advanced age and the attacks of acute illness, Buddha left Wethalie, and passed from village to village preaching, till he arrived at a monastery built in a grove of mango-trees in the Pawa country. Here, after a feast prepared by the pious founder, he was taken seriously ill. Knowing that his end was near, he went and bathed in the river, and directed Ananda to prepare a resting-place for him in the forest between two lofty trees. Lying under the shadow of the great trees, and attended by his faithful Ananda, Buddha gave final instructions on questions of discipline and faith, and the government of the church of his religion after his

death. As he lay dying, princes came to visit him, and Rahans arrived to receive his last words. Full of calmness, he gently rebuked Ananda for his grief and tears at the approaching death of his master, and comforted his disciples with the assurance that, though no longer among them in the flesh, he would still be with them by means of his doctrine. One of his last acts was to convert a heretic. In the first watch of the morning he addressed his disciples, saying, "The principle and existence of mutability carries along with it the principle of destruction; never forget this; let your minds be filled with this truth." Before the dawn of day Buddha entered the state of Nirvana.



CHAPTER XXVI

BUDDHISM AS A FAITH AND LIFE

THE last words of Buddha express the central idea of his religion. Everything changes; there is no finality. What we call matter undergoes incessant change; not for a moment does it remain the same. What we call mind is equally mutable. This world does not really exist; it is merely a series of shows or phantasms. Life here is only an incident in a long series of countless existences.

The belief in the doctrine of metempsychosis is a genuine faith on the part of the Buddhist; it colours every thought of his mind, it influences every act of his life, and it moulds all his opinions. To understand, however, the force of the belief in transmigration, the closely allied doctrine of *karma*, or accumulated merit or demerit, must be realised.

The Buddhist holds that conduct is the greatest factor in human existence. For him there is no forgiveness of sins by a pitying but just God, and the doctrine of vicarious salvation is to his mind utter foolishness. Merit or demerit, resulting from a man's words, thoughts, and deeds, is the only thing that lives; it is indestructible, and its results are everlasting. Man, it is held, can work out his own salvation, and it is he alone, and no one else, who can save his soul.

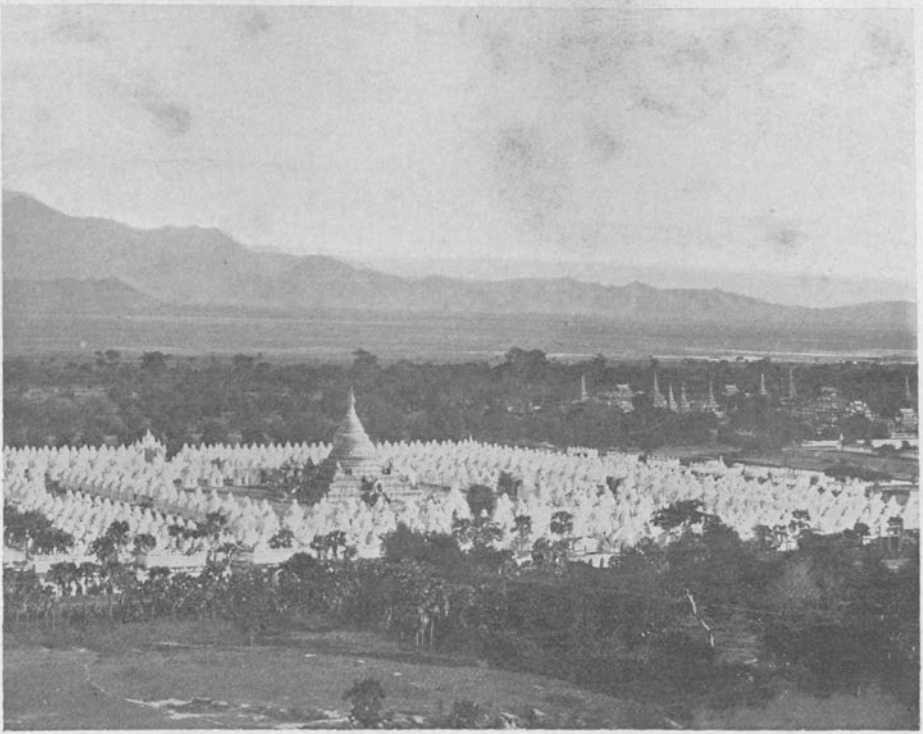
To attain to holiness is the ultimate aim of every living creature, but the goal is reached after infinite trouble, and after many backward slips from the right path. The soul[1]

[1] The word *soul* is used, though the Buddhist does not admit of a separate entity called by us the soul, only of *karma* or accumulated merit or demerit, which *is*, while the body changes and life passes away.

has, however, countless ages of time in which to aspire, atone, and achieve. When a person dies, his karma passes over to another new-born individual, who will be a creature higher or lower in the scale of creation, according to its merits or demerits in the previous existence. Thus man can be reborn as man, or as an animal, or in one of the hells, accordingly as he has done well or ill in the life just ended.

To escape from the ceaseless vexation of repeated existences is the endeavour of every Buddhist, hence the meaning of the pagodas seen to crown every hill in Burma; as it is believed that the erection of a pagoda to the honour of the great Teacher is an act of merit, which will win for the builder thereof entrance at once after death into the heaven of the Nats, and give him release, at any rate for an indefinite period of time, from the weary round of transmigration.

It is the belief in karma which makes a Buddhist so resigned to his fate, whatever it may be. Should he be poor and miserable, it is because in a former life he was wealthy and uncharitable; should he be born blind, it is because in a previous existence he used his eyes for an unlawful purpose; should he be rich and honoured, it is because by piety and self-sacrifice he had accumulated sufficient merit to earn happiness; but if he should now become selfish, luxurious, and unkind, he will have to pay the penalty in this or another existence and take a lower place in the scale of life; or perhaps even he may fall into hell, to climb again by slowly accumulated merit the steep and difficult path which leads back into the human state. Herein we find the cause of the Burman's want of ambition, and the absence of the desire to "get on," inasmuch as the attainment of wealth and happiness, by the possible performance of acts of demerit, will probably induce suffering in a future state. In fact, thirst (*trishna*), or the desire to possess, leading to grasping (*upadana*), is, Buddha taught, one of the chief causes of sin and sorrow in this world,



THE PAGODA OF ROYAL MERIT, AND THE FOUR-HUNDRED-AND-FIFTY PAGODAS OF THE LAW AT MANDALAY.

and consequently the complete suppression of and triumph over all desire is the highest aim set before the Buddhist recluse.

The whole theory of life and morals taught by Buddha is peculiarly oriental in its metaphysical abstruseness. As the East has been the cradle of all the religions of the world, one of which has been adopted by the nations of the West, while another closely allied is the religion of many of the nations of the East, it cannot fail to be extremely interesting to a Western to try and grasp the central ideas of Buddhism.

According to the teaching of Buddha, the commencement of this miserable existence is ignorance, or absence of knowledge; from ignorance springs imagination, which mistakes what is unreal for reality, and treats this world as substantial, while it consists only of shadows which take form and pass away. Imagination begets a false knowledge, which gives names and forms to everything; name and form give birth to the six senses—to the five recognised senses the Buddhist adds a sixth, the internal sense of the heart.—Through the senses we are put into communication with all objects, which gives rise to contact; from contact comes sensibility or sensation, which may be either pleasant or unpleasant; hence infallibly arises passion or desire; from passion comes conception, from conception birth into the world, whence inevitably follow change, decay, and death.

To enable mankind to escape from this never-ending cycle, which begins in ignorance and ends in death, and from which change, pain, and misery are never absent, Buddha evolved the four Noble Truths which are called the Wheel of the Law. The first truth is that pain is caused by birth, old age, sickness, and death; by being associated with what we dislike, and separated from what we love, and by the illusions of false knowledge. The second truth is that pain is produced by thirst or desire, which causes longing for an illusory satisfaction that is never obtained. This perpetually renewed craving

for one or another desired object is the prolific source of all miseries. The third truth is that the perfect and entire stifling of desire or "thirst" will destroy the production of pain. The fourth truth is that a pure heart and perfect rectitude of conduct will lead to the destruction of desire and the attainment of peace.

Indeed, how to reach Nirvana, the condition of passionless peace and perfect spirituality, was the burden of the teaching of the Wise One, the Lord Buddha; and out of his all-embracing compassion for suffering mankind, whom, with infinite pity, he saw bound by their passions, tormented by their desires, and perplexed by their ignorance, he never ceased to preach for nearly half a century the Perfect Law and the way of deliverance. Very beautiful and full of wisdom are the precepts of the great Teacher which have been preserved to us:—Love one another, live in peace, control your thoughts and passions, give up your desires; these are the great lessons inculcated by him in sermon, in parable, and in poetry.

"Never in this world doth hatred cease by hatred; hatred ceases by love; this is an old rule" (Dhammapada).

"The foolish follow after vanity, while the wise man guards earnestness as his greatest treasure" (Ibid.).

"Speak not harshly to anybody" (Ibid.).

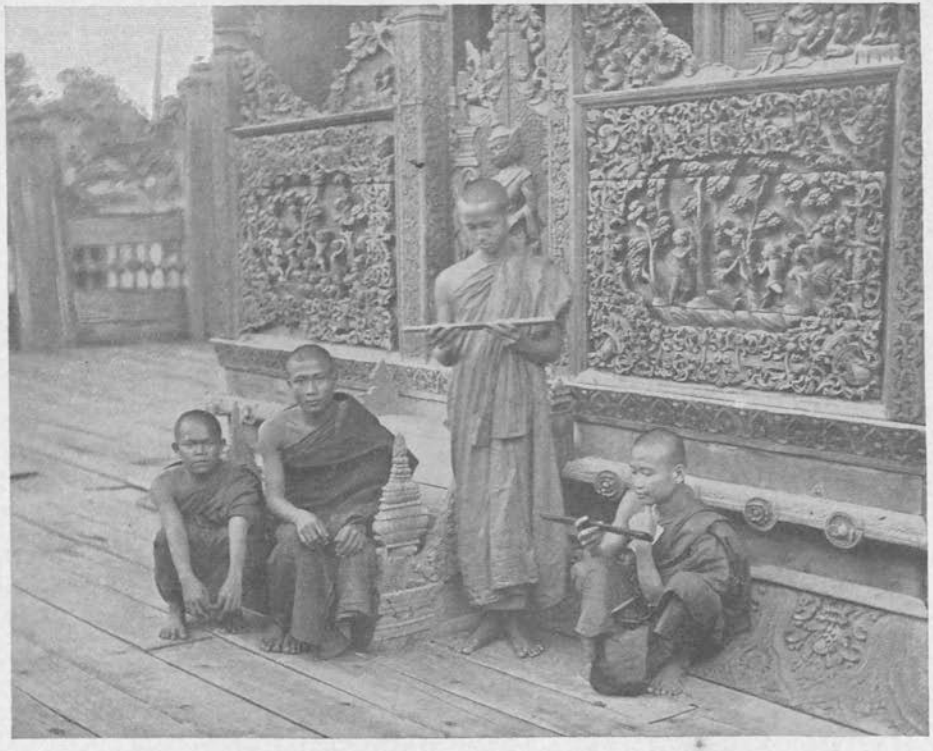
"With pure thoughts and fulness of love, I will do towards others what I do for myself" (Lalita Vistara).

"At the end of life the soul goes forth alone; whereupon only our good deeds befriend us" (Fo-sho-hing-tsan-king).

"He whose mind is subdued and perfectly controlled is happy" (Udanavarga).

"He who holds back rising anger like a rolling chariot—him I call a real driver; others merely hold the reins" (Dhammapada).

"Watch your thoughts" (Ibid.).



PHONGYEES READING THE SCRIPTURES.

"Control your tongue" (Dhammapada).

"Overcome anger by love" (Ibid.).

"One may conquer a thousand, thousand men in battle, but he who conquers himself alone is the greatest victor" (Ibid.).

"Be pure and live with the pure" (Dhammacariya-sutta).

"Regulate the mind, and the body will of itself go right" (Rock Inscriptions of Azoka).

"This is the greatest happiness—to subdue the selfish thought of 'I'" (Udanavarga).

Complete emancipation from passion and desire, and the attainment of that insight which enables a man to recognise abstract truth by meditation, are only obtained by self-denial and self-renunciation. Thus absolute chastity and a life of great austerity were exacted of the disciples or recluses, though Buddha refused to recognise the severe physical mortifications of the Brahmins as holy in themselves or as conducive to holiness. The complete conquest of the flesh and the negation of the desire to possess anything being achieved, holiness is reached by maintaining this condition of the mind and by meditation on the truth. It was naturally urged against Buddha, when his male relatives joined him and became recluses, and his father saw the heirs to his throne take the vow of chastity, that his religion, if followed by all, would ensure the extinction of the race. Buddha, therefore, agreed to teach the laity his law of life, the burden of which was to overcome hatred with love, to subdue anger, to control the mind, to give alms freely, to be kind to all living things, and to be calm.

The religion Buddha taught was a practical morality leading mankind to righteousness, purity, and peace; but though he seems to have given his disciples minute directions on matters of discipline and questions of principle, yet he founded

no hierarchy and ordained no priesthood. In Buddhism no priest with assumed spiritual powers stands between the people and the Supreme Being, for everybody, whether layman or monk, must work out his own salvation, in which no one can help or intermeddle. A personal God, or a great First Cause, was not preached by Buddha, but that such existed was never denied. The position taken was that here man walks in the darkness of ignorance; that he is fettered by his passions and blinded by impurity; and it is only when he has freed himself from the least trace of matter and the smallest taint of evil, and has attained to the perfect holiness and absolute calm of Nirvana that he will be able to comprehend the truth. To discuss the possibility of the existence of a personal God, to try and comprehend the nature of a Supreme Being and a holy Creator, is waste of time, for in the condition of ignorance and impurity in which man exists here on earth, pure spirit, absolute holiness, the divine nature cannot be apprehended. True wisdom consists, therefore, in leaving aside the unknowable, and preaching what is certain, namely, that righteousness is life, and setting mankind on one of the four paths which lead to holiness and ultimately to Nirvana.

The Four Paths, or really four stages of the same path, are clearly defined. Man enters on the first after conversion, on being convinced of the four noble Truths, and obtaining freedom from selfishness, doubt, and dependence on rites and ceremonies. The second path is trod by those who have also diminished, but not entirely overcome, lust and hatred. They will return only once more to this world. In the third path are those who have entirely suppressed all sensuality and every trace of ill-feeling to others. The fourth path is that of the Holy Ones, who have in addition rooted out from their hearts all love of life on earth, and desire for life in heaven, who have suppressed pride and self-righteousness, and replaced ignorance with wisdom. These Holy Ones have attained deliverance, all

desire is extinguished, and when they die karma is exhausted, an individual existence is no longer exacted, and they pass into the state of Nirvana.

It has been customary in Europe to speak of Nirvana as annihilation, and to deplore that in Buddhism the end of the long striving after holiness is the extinction of the soul. On this point Professor Max Müller says: "If we look in the Dhammapada at every passage where Nirvana is mentioned, there is not one which would require that its meaning should be annihilation, while most, if not all, would become perfectly unintelligible if we assigned to the real Nirvana that signification." The misapprehension seems to have arisen from the opposite poles of thought of the Western and Eastern mind. The Western mind is intensely individualistic, and possession is the avowed object of our lives; to possess wealth, position, and the things we love is our constant endeavour, and to possess salvation and eternal life is the highest aim of our religion. Now the Buddhist holds that this insistence on individualism is wrong, and that the desire to possess anything, even life in heaven, is one of the chief causes of evil; therefore it is only by the loss of all desire, all selfishness, all self-consciousness, and even of self or individuality itself, that the state of absolute wisdom, perfect holiness, and unruffled calm called Nirvana is reached. What Nirvana is, a Buddhist would no more think of describing or explaining than he would think of differentiating the Godhead, or analysing the First Cause; and in this some think he is wise. The result is that one of the finest codes of morality has been established as a religion without the belief in a Deity, and a theory of life evolved by which it is taught that conduct alone inevitably brings its own reward or punishment, and thus all the perplexing inequalities of this life are logically accounted for.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE PHONGYEES AND THEIR INFLUENCE

BUDDHISM is preserved in a purer form, and more nearly resembles the simple ethical religion taught by its founder, in Burma than in any other Buddhist country. The phongyees or monks are the representatives of the recluses or Rahans who rallied round the great Teacher, and they have preserved undefiled, and have handed down through the ages, the great moral precepts, obedience to which will lead to deliverance from sin and sorrow.

The phongyees are in no sense priests; they have no sacerdotal functions to perform, they offer no sacrifices, they officiate in no religious services. They do not assume to stand as mediators between man and God, and their prayers and intercessions are not demanded by the people. They are simply men who, to win deliverance and escape from the vortex of repeated existences, have taken the vows of obedience, poverty, and chastity, and have retired into the monasteries or kioungs to live a life of austerity and meditation. The phongyees are solely engaged in saving their own souls, and have no other care. A charitable public supplies them with the houses in which they live, the clothes they wear, and the food they eat, and asks in return no thanks, but is instead grateful for the opportunities thus given of performing acts of charity and of earning "merit."

Every morning, soon after daybreak, there may be seen issuing from the kioung, standing amidst its grove of palm and plantain trees, a long and silent procession of yellow-

robed figures, who, bare-footed and bare-headed, pass in every direction along the streets and lanes. Their shaven heads are bent low, they look neither to the left nor to the right; in their arms they carry large black bowls. As they pass, the women come out of the bamboo houses, and, after shekhoeing the mendicants, place in the bowls rice, vegetables, and what they can spare of food or gifts. The phongyees speak no word of thanks, but pass silently on. In about an hour's time the yellow figures are seen wending their way, as solemnly as they departed, back to the kioung. Thus the commands of Buddha are fulfilled—the phongyees by living a life of poverty, the laity by exercising their charity towards them.

Every male child, when he arrives at the age of puberty, or earlier, is obliged to become a novice or shin in a monastery, to wear the yellow robe, and beg his daily food. Here he remains for a certain length of time, generally for the space of one Lent or rainy season. The induction of the young neophyte into the kioung is considered an event of great importance; by it the boy obtains his "humanity"; he is then baptized with a new name, by which he is known in the monastery. The ceremony consists in a combination of gaiety and solemnity characteristic of Burma.

The postulant is dressed in his finest clothes, and mounted on a pony, or is carried on men's shoulders in a richly decorated palanquin shaded by gold umbrellas. Preceded by a band, and by men and women on foot, gaily dressed, bearing presents in their hands and engaged in dancing and singing, the procession takes a circuitous course to the monastery. Arrived at the kioung, the young neophyte is delivered by his parents into the care of the Superior. His fine clothes are thrown on one side, his long black hair is cut off, and his head is shaved; he then bathes, and putting on his pasoh, he comes again before the assembled monks. Bowing himself three times to the ground, he begs in a Pali formula to be

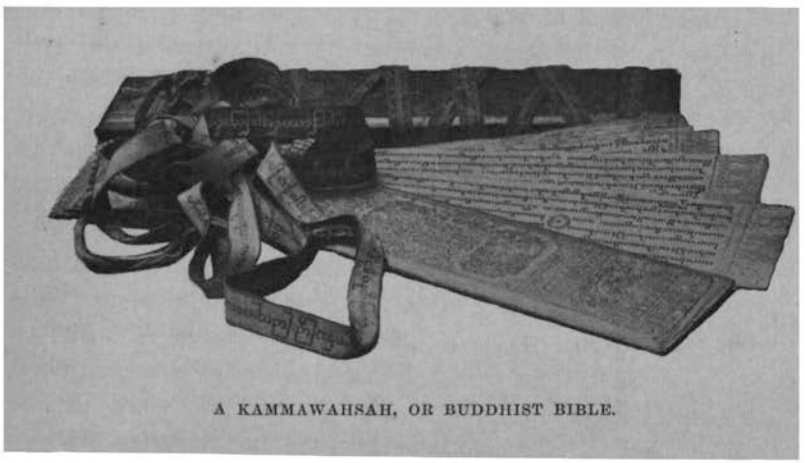
admitted as a neophyte to the Holy Assembly. He is then duly robed in the yellow garments of the order; the begging bowl is hung by a strap round his neck, and he is formally admitted as a member of the kioung.

The duties of the shin are to wait on the elders of the monastery and minister to their wants; to continue his studies, already begun, in the arts of reading, writing, and arithmetic, and to learn the Buddhist scriptures by heart. A boy generally returns to his family at the end of a year or two, or even at the end of the first Lent. A fervent Buddhist will stay three Lents in the monastery; those who stay longer are formally admitted to the Assembly, and are henceforth called yahans; and those who display enough steadfastness and self-denial to stay ten years at least in the monastery are called phongyees. The longer a phongyee stays in a monastery the more he is honoured. A monk of twenty-five Lents or Wahs will shekhoe another of thirty Lents; and if monastic vows are kept during the whole lifetime without a break from youth upwards, the phongyee is called white or "stainless from youth," and at his death the highest funeral honours are paid him.

No man can take monastic vows till he is twenty years of age, and he must first obtain the consent of his parents, and give proof that he is acquainted with the Buddhist scriptures. Having satisfied the superior of the monastery on these points, the postulant is provided with the eight sacred objects a monk requires. These are the *dookoht*, or square piece of yellow cloth, folded many times and worn over the left shoulder, with the ends hanging down behind and before; the *kohwoot*, or loin-cloth; the *thengbeing*, or yellow toga-like garment thrown over the chest and shoulders, and falling to the knees; the *thabeht*, or begging pot, worn suspended by a cord round the neck; the *kaban*, or leathern girdle, used for binding on the kohwoot; the *pé-koht* or small axe for splitting wood; an *att* or needle,

and a *yaysit*, a strainer or water-dipper, with which to filter drinking water, so as to avoid taking animal life. To these is added a broad lotus-leaf-shaped fan, made of a single frond of palm attached to an S-shaped handle, which fan is carried at any assembly or public place where women are present, so that the monks may protect themselves from the sight of what may prove a danger and temptation.

The candidate then proceeds to the hall of ordination, which in Mandalay is the exquisite little carved building



A KAMMAWAHSAH, OR BUDDHIST BIBLE.

known as the Dragon Pagoda. Here ten or twelve phongyees are assembled with a master or Upitze, and an assistant who reads the ritual of ordination from the lacquered, gilded, and illuminated leaves of a manual, known as the Kammawahsah. The candidate, carrying his yellow garments and alms-bowl, kneels down, and after acknowledging that the president is his master, and that the sacred utensils provided are his, he withdraws to a distance of twelve cubits.

The assistant or secretary then addresses the assembled monks in these words:—"Venerable Upitze, and you brethren herein congregated, listen to my words! The candidate who

now stands in a humble posture before you solicits from the upitze the favour of being honoured with the dignity of pyin-sin. If it appears to you that everything is properly arranged and disposed for this purpose, I will duly admonish him."

Then turning to the candidate he says:—"Oh, candidate! be attentive to my words, and beware lest on this solemn occasion thou utterest an untruth or concealest aught from our knowledge. Learn that there are certain incapacities and defects which render a person unfit for admittance into our order. Moreover, when before this assembly thou shalt be interrogated respecting such defects, thou art to answer truly, and declare what incapacities thou mayest labour under. Now this is not the time to remain silent and decline thy head; every member of the assembly has the right to interrogate thee at his pleasure, and it is thy bounden duty to return an answer to all his questions.

"Candidate! art thou affected with leprosy or any such odious malady? Hast thou scrofula or any similar complaint? Dost thou suffer from asthma or croup? Art thou affected with those complaints which arise from a corrupted blood? Art thou affected by madness or other ills caused by giants, witches, or the evil spirits of the forest and mountains?"

To each separate question the candidate answers:—"From such complaints and bodily disorders I am free."

The examination proceeds:—"Art thou a man?"—"I am." "Art thou a true and legitimate son?"—"I am." "Art thou involved in debts?"—"I am not." "Art thou the bondman or underling of some great man?"—"I am not." "Have thy parents given consent to thy ordination?"—"They have." "Hast thou reached the age of twenty years?"—"I have." "Are thy vestments and sacred patta prepared?"—"They are." "Candidate, what is thy name?"—"My name is Wago" (a

vile and unworthy thing). "What is the name of thy master?" —"His name is Upitze."

The assistant then turns towards the assembled phongyees and asks if the candidate may come forward. Consent being given, the candidate is bidden to advance and ask the consent of the assembly to his ordination. Kneeling down and sitting on his heels, and with his hands to his forehead in an attitude of humble obeisance, he says three times, "I beg, O fathers of this assembly, to be admitted as Rahan. Have pity on me, take me from the state of layman, which is one of sin and imperfection, and advance me to that of Rahan, which is one of virtue and perfection."

The assistant then declaring that the candidate is free from all disabilities, says, "Now let the assembly complete his ordination. To whomsoever this seems good, let him keep silence; whosoever thinks otherwise, let him declare that the candidate is unworthy of being admitted." Solemn silence giving consent, the candidate is then declared to be admitted into the Assembly of the Perfect.

The candidate is then formally admonished as to his duties and the things he must do and avoid. He is told that he must beg for his food by the labour of walking; that he must clothe himself in yellow rags, but that he may, on account of his talent or virtue, receive habits of cotton, silk, or wool; that he must dwell in a house under the shade of lofty trees; that he must use certain medicines.

Against the four cardinal sins he is especially warned, as the commission of one of them entails loss of the dignity just attained and expulsion from the order. He is then solemnly addressed:—

"Elect, being admitted into our society, it is no longer lawful for you to indulge in carnal pleasures. . . . Beware, therefore, lest you pollute yourself with such a crime.

"It is unlawful and forbidden for an elect to take things

that belong to another, or even to covet them. . . . Beware of theft during the whole of your mortal journey.

"Again, an elect can never knowingly deprive any living thing of life, or wish the death of any one, however troublesome he may prove. . . . Cautiously avoid so heinous a crime.

"No member of our brotherhood can ever arrogate to himself extraordinary gifts or supernatural perfections, or through vain-glory give himself out as a holy man; such, for instance, as to withdraw into solitary places, or, on pretence of enjoying ecstasies like the areeya, afterwards presume to teach others the way to uncommon spiritual attainments. . . . Take care that you do not give way to such an excess."

To each admonition the candidate replies, "As I am instructed so will I perform."

The ceremony over, the Rahan enters the monastery as a simple brother, where he may stay as long as he keeps his vows. Should he find, however, that his virtue and self-control are not equal to the life of austerity and chastity demanded of him, he is free to quit the monastery and become a layman, but as long as he remains a member of the "noble order of the yellow robe," absolute obedience to the moral code is enforced. If he commit any of the 227 lesser sins, they can be atoned for by public confession and by penance; but if he commit one of the four cardinal sins, he is inevitably expelled from the Assembly of the Perfect.

The ceremony of excommunication is very solemn. The monks gather in a circle round the culprit; the Abbot recites sentences out of the Kammawahsah, to each of which the monks respond. The yellow robes are then taken off the recreant monk, his alms-bowl is reversed, and he is driven forth from the sacred precincts of the kioung, to meet outside with scorn and contumely, and to be treated as an outcast for whom there is no place on earth.

The rules of monastic life by means of which the monk is

enabled to fulfil his vows are extremely strict. To prevent the insidious inroads of avarice or the desire to obtain the power which the possession of money or property gives, a phongyee is not allowed to receive money, nor even to handle gold or silver. He has, in fact, nothing which he may call his own; home, food, and raiment are provided for him by the charitable, and he has no care for the morrow as to the means of subsistence. To prevent greed or covetousness he must, whenever he requires anything, such as water to drink, turn to an attendant shin and ask, "Is it lawful?" Whereupon he rises, and approaching him respectfully, presents the article, saying, "It is lawful." No monk is permitted to taste intoxicating drinks; only two meals are allowed in the morning, and after midday no food may be taken.

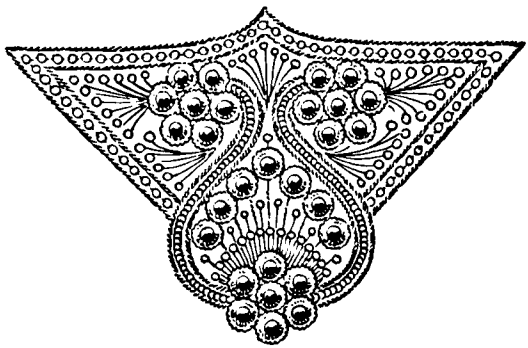
Theoretically the phongyee is supposed to live on the rice and boiled vegetables placed in his patta in the morning, but actually more palatable food is provided and sent daily to the kioung by the pious. The amount is, however, limited at each meal, and the phongyee is taught to eat slowly and with solemn indifference to the pleasures of taste. His voice and gestures must always be mild and calm, his aspect humble, his gait restrained. "He labours to keep his soul free from vain inquiry, from eager desire of learning news, and from an idle and unnecessary interference in things or matters strange to him. It seems that he has the wise saying always present to his mind, "Where art thou when thou art not present to thyself? and when thou hast run over all things, what profit will it be to thee if thou hast neglected thyself?" During his perambulations he never notices or salutes the persons he meets on his way: he is indifferent to the attentions and marks of the highest veneration paid to him by the people; he never returns thanks for the offerings made to him, nor does he repay with a single regard the kindness proffered to him. Objects most calculated to awaken curiosity by

their novelty and interest ought to find him cold, indifferent, and unconcerned. His self-collection accompanies him everywhere, and disposes his soul to an uninterrupted meditation on some points of the law."[1] In fact, he is a man who for himself has conquered himself, and who to gain another world has renounced the pleasures of this. He does not assume to be the spiritual guide of his fellow-men; only when specially asked on the occasion of great festivals, on duty-days in the zayats, and during Lent, at the house of some pious layman, does he expound the law and recite the sermons and precepts of Gautauma. As shown in the service of ordination, he is pledged to no spiritual mission nor endued with special spiritual powers; in fact, to claim such is a cardinal sin. It is as the embodiment of the laws and precepts of the holy Gautauma, and as the living example of poverty, chastity, humility, and austerity that the phongyee is honoured above all men, and if he keeps his vows during his whole lifetime, the deepest veneration is given him. Women shekhoe the boy-yahan in the streets, and in the olden days the proud king would vacate his throne and sit humbly at the feet of the Abbot or Tha-thana-peing.

The influence which the monks exercise by virtue of their lives, their austere virtue, and their unequivocal chastity, would probably not be long-lived if it were not for the fact that they have been for centuries, and are still, engaged in the task of national education, and in teaching Burmese boys the arts of reading and writing, while instilling into their minds the great moral principles of Buddhism. Life in the monastery is doubtless idle; prolonged thought on eternal matters is too exalted a mental exercise for minds untrained, and meditation in the long sunny afternoons very often degenerates into the dreams of sleep; but still it is to the

[1] Bigandet's "Life of Gautauma."

phongyees that the Burmans owe the fact that, long before the English established schools, every Burman boy was taught to read and write, and to repeat by heart the five commandments and the great moral laws of Buddha in his own tongue or in the Pali of the scriptures.



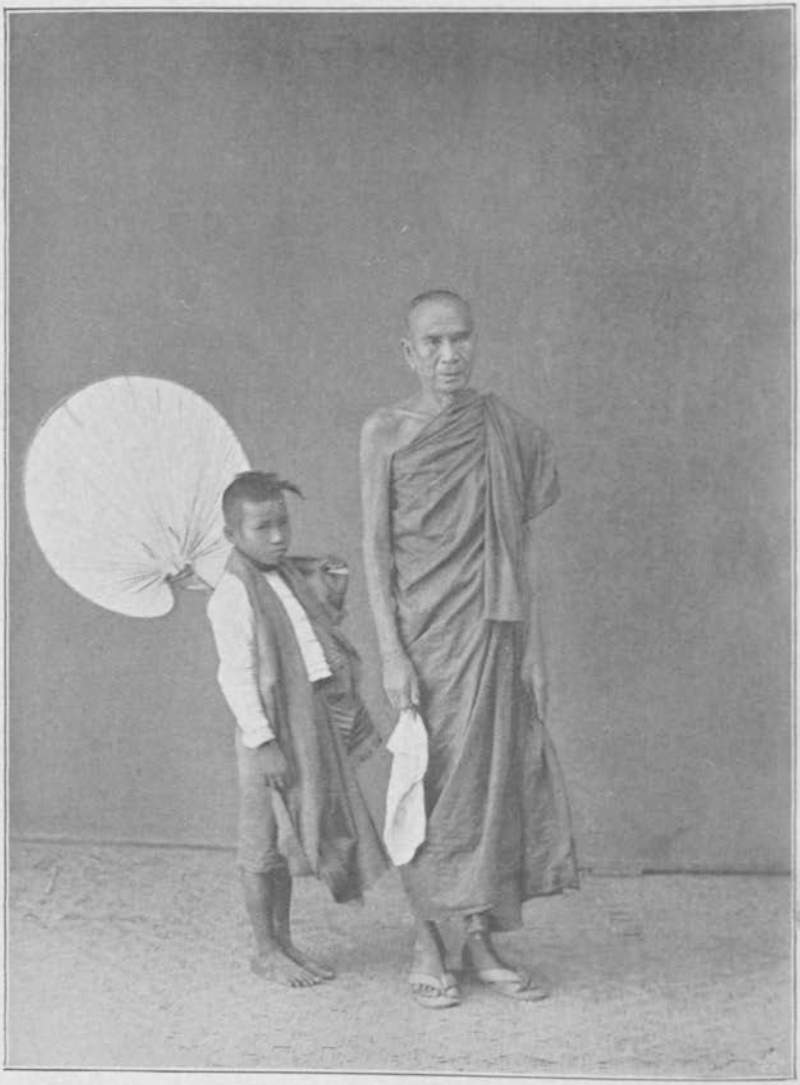
CHAPTER XXVIII

LIFE AND EDUCATION IN THE MONASTERY

EVERY monastery in Burma is under the direction of a prior or Sayah, who is always a phongyee, that is to say, a Religious of not less than ten years' standing; the monasteries in a district are under the jurisdiction of a superior or geing-obe, and the religious matters of the whole country are controlled by one or more Sadows, who are honoured with the title of Tha-thana-peing, which means "supreme in matters appertaining to religion."

If the Sayah of a kioung is a man of character as well as of piety he may exercise a widespread influence for good, for the monasteries are the nurseries of thought, morality, and religion of the youth of Burma.

Before describing the internal life of a monastery, it may be well to explain in more detail than has hitherto been done the structure and plan of a kioung. These buildings are placed within an enclosure or parawoon, which is planted with palmyra, peepul, tamarind, and plantain trees. They are always raised on strong teak columns, eight or ten feet from the ground. As with all other buildings in Burma, the kioung consists of only one story, over which rises a seven-tiered roof decorated with elaborate carvings. It is often also gilded from the ground to the highest pinnacle. At the ends of the gables carved little pinnacles are observed surmounted with a wooden flag, and each is crowned with a miniature metal htee, gilt and hung with bells. A broad open verandah runs right round



A SAYAH WITH AN ATTENDANT SCHOLAR.

the building, to which access is given by a flight of steps, flanked on either side with plaster or wood balustrades, decorated with figures of beloos, Nats, dragons, &c.

Under the tall carved spire-like roof is a large hall opening on to the verandah; the lofty roof is supported by straight teak pillars, which are often lacquered, gilded, and decorated with glass mosaics. On the eastern side of the hall is a raised daïs, on which the phongyees sit and receive their guests. Against the wall is placed the great image of Buddha, surrounded by votive offerings of flowers, candles, praying flags, white paper umbrellas, &c. Here are kept the chests which contain the manuscripts and books of the kioung, and also the shrines and models of pagodas and monasteries which have been presented by the pious. If the monastery is large, there are several rooms leading off from the central hall, which are used for teaching or sleeping purposes, or for the habitation of the Sayah or the Sadow. All are equally bare of furniture; a mat spread on the hard boards serves for a bed, and the well-swept floor, here as elsewhere in Burma, takes the place of chairs and table.

Besides the shins, yahans, phongyees, and the sayah living in the monastery, there are generally a number of students who are boarders. Indeed, for all its external air of dreamy repose, the kioung is often a busy centre, and the noise of the scholars, who are shouting their lessons at the top of their voices, echoes across the great hall, and is not subdued by the presence of the solemn statue of Buddha. Boys are sent to the monastery, to be taught reading, writing, and arithmetic, when they are about eight or nine years of age. All Burman boys go to these monastic schools, whether they be poor fishermen's sons or the scions of a royal house; in democratic Burma none pay for education, and all are treated alike.

When they first come the little lads are given slates, and

are set to work to learn the alphabet, a few letters at a time. These they shout incessantly as loud as possible, the yellow-robed monk sitting gravely cross-legged on the daïs in front of his pupils, who sprawl knees and elbows on the ground. Gradually they learn in the same way to spell, and then to repeat by heart the five great commandments, and the Pali doxologies which are chanted at the pagodas. The art of writing the round Burmese characters by means of a pencil on strips of palm leaf is also slowly learnt, as well as the simple rules of arithmetic. All the books used are religious; thus with the arts of reading and writing, the great principles of Buddhism are instilled into the youthful minds till they become the inseparable furniture of the mind, so that thoughts can hardly be formulated without their aid.

The education given is extremely simple, but it makes a Burman contented with his lot; it gives him rules of guidance for conduct, food for great thoughts, and motives for a boundless charity and rigid self-control.

The following is somewhat the life of the occupants of a large and active monastery. At daybreak, that is, about half-past five, all are aroused by the sound of a great bell. The yahans and phongyees rise from their mats, wash their faces and hands, rinse out their mouths and arrange their yellow robes, in which they have slept, and recite a few pious precepts. All the inmates of the monastery then gather before the great statue of Buddha in the central hall, with the abbot at their head, and the phongyees, yahans, novices, boarders, and scholars arranged in order, and they intone the morning service. They then separate to perform their various duties: the scholars and novices sweep the floor of the kioung, fetch the daily supply of water from the well, filter it and place it ready for use; some tend the trees in the compound, and others gather flowers to place on the altar, while the elders retire to meditate on the miseries of life. A light meal is

Lemercier gravure

then taken, preceded by a short homily. Lessons are now given for an hour, and the voices of the pupils shouting their tasks breaks on the still morning air.

At eight o'clock all who wear the yellow robe pass in single file out of the sacred parawoon (enclosure) headed by the abbot, each bearing a black alms-bowl in his arms, and with shaven head bent low, with eyes cast down, with uncovered head, and in solemn silence they proceed to beg for their food. In about an hour, or an hour and a half, the mendicants return. An offering is then made on the shrine of Buddha, and all the inmates proceed to take breakfast. In monasteries where the rule is very ascetic, the meal is made solely of the gifts received in the alms-bowls; but where discipline is more lax, the cold unsavoury mess contained in the bowls is given to the scholars or any sojourners in the kioung, to eat as much as they like, and give the rest to the pariah dogs and crows; while a hot breakfast is prepared for the abbot and monks by the layman, who lives in the monastery, and whose duty it is to look after the corporeal affairs of the institution and its inmates. However this may be, breakfast is the only substantial meal in the twenty-four hours; at half-past eleven a light refection of fruits is taken, and after midday no monk is allowed to taste food, it being believed that solid food taken after the sun begins to decline towards the west exposes a man to the temptations of impurity. Drinks may however be taken, and as betel-chewing is not expressly forbidden, it becomes an inveterate habit of the fasting monks.

After breakfast the alms-bowls are washed, again a few verses are chanted before the statue of Buddha, and the pious are bidden to meditate on the duties of kindness and affection. The scholars are then allowed to play in a quiet and decorous manner in the parawoon, and the abbot and phongyees receive visits from those who come to consult them on religious matters or simply to pay their respects. These visits are very cere-

monious. The phongyee is seated cross-legged on the raised daïs, the visitor approaches, and, lifting his hands to his forehead, he prostrates himself three times and says, "In order that all the sins I have committed, in thought, in word, or in deed, may be pardoned to me, I prostrate myself three times, once in honour of the Buddha, again in honour of the Law, and thirdly in honour of the Assembly, the three precious things. By so doing I hope to be preserved from the three calamities, from the four states of punishment, and from the five enemies, fire, water, thieves, plunderers, and malevolent people." The Sayah replies, "As a reward for his merit and his obeisances, may the supporter of the monastery be freed from the three calamities, the four states of punishment, the five enemies, and from harm of what kind soever—may all his aims be good and end well; may he advance firmly in the noble path, perfect himself in wisdom, and finally obtain rest in Nirvana." All intercourse between visitors and the monks is regulated by ceremonious etiquette, the object being to maintain calmness, dignity, and self-restraint.

After the midday meal the scholars return to their lessons till four o'clock, when they go home and dine; but the novices are obliged to fast like their elders. The phongyees pass the time in various ways; some study the ancient scriptures, others superintend the copying of manuscripts on palm leaves, some walk out, and others talk with visitors, and some are idle and doze away the afternoon. Meditation is, however, considered the most holy and profitable occupation, and the monks sit for hours telling the beads of their rosaries, and striving to obtain by abstraction absolute power over the will and over the mind.

At sunset, which occurs at about six o'clock all the year round in Burma, the great bell sounds again, and all are summoned within the confines of the kioung. The scholars are called upon to repeat to the abbot, or some of the elders,

all they have learnt, and perhaps a sermon is given, or a point of doctrine is explained by the Sayah.

"At half-past eight or nine, the evening is closed with devotions in the presence of the image of Buddha. All assemble according to their rank as in the morning, and together intone the vesper lauds. When the last sounds of the mournful chant have died away in the dimly-lighted chamber, one of the novices, or a clever scholar, stands up and with a loud voice proclaims the hour, the day of the week, the day of the month, and the number of the year. Then all shekhoe before the Buddha thrice, and thrice before the abbot, and retire to rest. Those who have experienced the impressiveness of this ceremonial, called the Thah-thanah-hylouk, will not readily forget the powerful effect it has on the feelings. It is the fit ending of a day full of possibilities for all. If the same routine gone through day after day becomes monotonous, and loses some of its power for good, yet the effect of such a school, presided over by an abbot of intelligence and earnestness, must infallibly work for the good of all connected with it, and especially so in the case of an impulsive, impressionable people like the Burmese. As long as all the men of the country pass through the kioung, the teaching of Western missionaries can have but little power to shake the power of Buddhism over the people. The moral truths of both religions, Christianity and Buddhism, are practically the same, and who can prove aught else without calling in the aid of faith? The Burman is convinced that no other creed will suit him so well, and the number of monasteries in all parts of the country renders it easy for every one to obtain entrance for his children. The king sent his sons to the kioung, and the poorest and most sinful wretch need not fear that his child will be turned away from the gates. Teaching is really all the phongyee can do for the people; but it is precisely this moderate amount of teaching,

revealing as it does to all the stern simplicity of the monastic life, that keeps the faith active in the country."[1]

Venerated during his lifetime, a phongyee is honoured beyond all men at his death. The meaning of the word phongyee is "great glory," and his funeral is called a phongyee-byan, which signifies "the return of the great glory." The words represent the belief that a monk does not die, to begin again the weary round of existences, but that he returns to the heaven from whence he came. If the phongyee has been famous for his learning and piety, and has been steadfast to his vows of chastity and austerity for many *Wahs* (Lents), then his obsequies are celebrated with a pomp and publicity which has no equal in Burma.

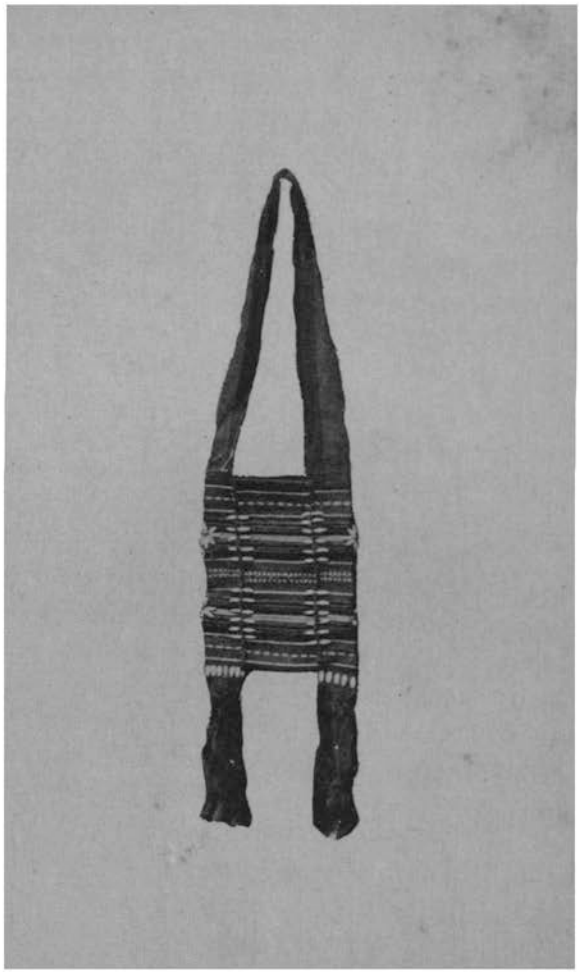
The corpse is first embalmed and is then swathed in linen, which is varnished and covered with gold leaf. The arms are folded over the chest, and the body is placed in a coffin made of the trunk of a tree hollowed out. This coffin is gilded and placed within a sarcophagus which is resplendent with paintings and mosaics of coloured glass. A mortuary chapel is then erected with a tapering spire or pya-that, and here the body lies in state in the richly decorated sarcophagus, shaded by a white umbrella. It may remain for several months till sufficient money is collected to defray the expenses of the funeral rites, and all the while there is a never-ending stream of pilgrims, who come from far and wide to make their offerings of flowers and money at the shrine, and to recite verses of prayer and praise; but what seems so strange to the European, who associates always the saddest ideas with death, the "return of the great glory" is celebrated by bands of music and by pwés and all the signs of great rejoicing. The cremation of the body finally takes place in an open space outside the town. An immense funeral pyre is erected of bamboo matting and pasteboard, gilded and decorated; it rises to a height of fifteen

[1] Shway Yoe, "The Burman."

to twenty feet, and is surmounted by a lofty canopy. The great event has been announced by the sound of a gong all over the country-side, and from every village processions stream out bearing offerings of pya-thats (spires), which are placed round the pyre.

At the kioung a strange scene and still stranger contest takes place. To draw a phongyee's body to the pyre is considered a great honour, and before the coffin is placed on the car strong rattan cords are attached to it, and a tug-of-war takes place between contending aspirants for the privilege. This unseemly struggle may last for some hours. It being at last decided, the coffin is deposited on the car, and it is drawn by men to the pyre and is hoisted on to the high platform.

The lighting of the pyre of a phongyee is done in a special way; it must be ignited by a rocket fired from a distance of forty or fifty yards. Immense rockets, made of the trunks of trees hollowed out and crammed full of explosives and combustibles, are manufactured in the villages for weeks beforehand, each village contending for the honour of firing the pile. The sending off of these gigantic rockets is attended with much danger, and often with loss of life. At last one strikes the pyre, and soon the great spire, the gilded coffin, and the offerings are all consumed amid the cheers of the people. One more brother has passed away from this world of shadows, and only his good deeds and the memory of his holy life remain, to encourage others to walk in the four paths that lead to Nirvana.



BOOK IV

THE STORY OF BURMA FOR TWENTY-FIVE CENTURIES

CHAPTER XXIX

BURMA COLONISED FROM INDIA—TAGOUNG, PROME, PEGU, AND ARAKAN FOUNDED—THE SUVARMA BHUMI, OR GOLDEN LAND OF THE SOUTH

(FROM 800 B.C. TO 500 A.D.)

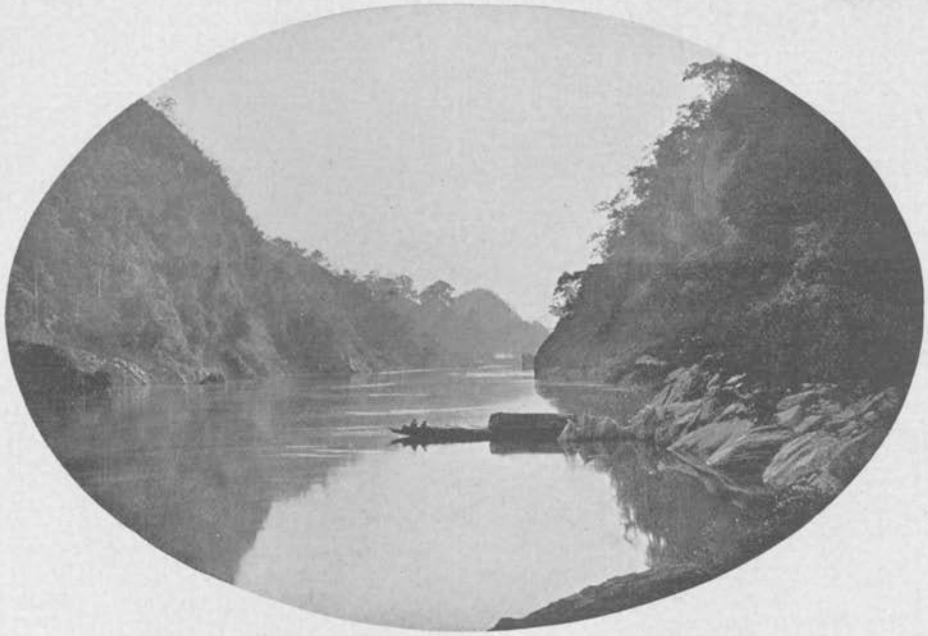
WE learn from the ancient Burmese chronicle, the Maha Rajaweng, and from national traditions, that in the far dim past, before the time of Gautauma Buddha, Kshatriya princes crossed the mountains dividing Burma from Gangetic India and conquered the Mongoloid tribes then inhabiting the valley of the Irrawaddy. They built the city of Tagoung and laid the foundations of the kingdom of Burma. The aboriginal Mongolian people probably came from the land of Bhote, beyond the snowy Himalayas, and passing along the banks of the Bramaputra and Irrawaddy rivers, reached Assam and Burma. Tagoung on the Upper Irrawaddy was built, according to Burmese tradition, by Abhi Raja about 800 B.C. The ruins of this city remain to this day. Of the two sons of Abhi Raja, one migrated to the Kubo valley and founded the kingdom of Arakan, and the other reigned at Tagoung, and was the founder of a dynasty which lasted about two hundred years. A second dynasty was founded by Daza Raja, who led a band of Kshatriyas from Gangetic India and built the city of old Pagahn close to Tagoung. There were sixteen kings of this dynasty. B.C. 800.

The story runs that the Ainshemeng or heir-apparent, the brother of the Queen of the last of these kings, lost his way in

the forest while pursuing a wild boar. As he wandered on, he came to the conclusion that the cares of kingship would be toilsome, and that it was preferable to become a hermit. He went down the Irrawaddy, and finally came to a hill where there was a cave, in which he took up his abode. The twin sons of the King of Tagoung were both born blind, and were hence precluded from reigning, and doomed to death. The Queen protected them till they were grown up, and then put them in a boat and set them afloat on the Irrawaddy. On their way down the stream they miraculously recovered their sight, and they finally arrived at the hill where their uncle, the Ainshemeng, lived as a hermit. Here they saw a maiden drawing water from the river, and they learnt that she was the daughter of the lost heir to the throne. The elder of the two brothers, Maha Thambawa, married his cousin and founded
B.C. 483. the city of Prome on the hill where the hermit lived, 483 B.C. The Kings of Burma claimed descent from Maha Thambawa, and through him from the earlier Kings of Tagoung.

It is probable that about this time there was a migration into the upper part of the Irrawaddy valley, of the tribes of the Tai or Shan race from the west, and that the true reason for the change of the royal city from Tagoung to Prome was the occupation of the upper country, which was first settled from India, by invading barbarians. What is apparent in Burma is that, in the early eras of its history, civilisation spread from the north down the valley of the Irrawaddy, and did not, till much later, creep up from the Delta.

According to the Burmese chronicle, the Kings of the dynasty of Maha Thambawa reigned for five hundred years. The royal city Tharekhettara was built on the plain five miles east of Prome, the ruins of which still exist. It is probable that this ancient capital was destroyed in an invasion of the Talaings from the south. The Burmese, driven northwards by the victorious race, finally settled midway between the old royal



THE UPPER REACHES OF THE IRRAWADDY.

cities of Prome and Tagoung, and founded the city and dynasty of new Pagahn.

In the meantime a nation had arisen in the delta of the Irrawaddy. The Suvarna Bhumi, or golden land of Buddhist legends, and probably the golden Chersonese of Ptolemy, had from remote antiquity been colonised from India, and was the centre of a prosperous export trade in silk with China. "The city called Thina, not on the coast, but inland," was probably Thatun, the native name for the ancient capital of Pegu.

At one of the mouths of the great river, near the present Rangoon, there had been from remotest antiquity a holy site or mound. It is related in the Buddhist records of Ceylon that when Gautauma attained perfection in the forest of Kiripalu, two brothers called Tapusa and Palikat arrived from Suvarna Bhumi, the golden land, with five hundred carts of merchandise. After making an offering of honey to Buddha, they begged of him some memento, and he gave them eight hairs from his head. With this precious gift they returned to their native town, the port of Ukkalaba, and enshrined the eight hairs of Buddha in a pagoda, which has been since known as the Shway Dagohn.

Two centuries later, about 241 B.C., the missionaries Sono and Uttaro were deputed, at the third great Buddhist Synod at Pataliputra, to go to Suvarna Bhumi to convert the Talaings to the true faith. At this time the delta-territory was occupied by aboriginal Mongoloid tribes, among whom Indian colonists and traders from Telingana had settled at certain commercial ports. Through these emigrants, religion, arts, and industries were introduced, and the tribes gradually consolidated into a nation. They were known to foreigners by the name of the Talaings, though they called themselves Mun or Mon. The earliest port and city was Thatun, situated on a creek opening into the Gulf of Martaban. Extensive remains of this ancient city still exist.

B.C. 241.

In the sixth century the city of Pegu or Hansawadi was founded by two brothers, Thamala and Wimala, of the royal race. Katha Kumma, the son of Thamala, was a powerful king, and established his rule over the whole delta, and eastward as far as the Salwen river. Tharekhettara had been overthrown before Pegu was founded.

The early records of Pegu, or the kingdom of the Talaings, are meagre in the extreme, but it is probable that for the first thousand years of the Christian era, the delta as far as Prome on the north, and the Salwen river on the east, was the home of a prosperous commercial people who traded with China and India.

In tracing the outlines of the rise and history of the two Indo-Mongoloid peoples who inhabited the valley of the Irrawaddy, we note, as far back as in the beginning of the Christian era, the commencement of that racial contest between the Talaings or Peguans and the Burmans which has only now ceased, through the fusion of the two races under the strong government of a more dominant people.

Thus in the first century of our era we see the valley of the Irrawaddy occupied by the Shan or Tai people in the north, by the Burmese in the centre, and by the Talaings in the delta and as far north as Prome. Buddhism was the religious faith of all these peoples, but debased more or less by Nat-worship, and later by Naga or dragon-worship.

CHAPTER XXX

THE RISE AND FALL OF PAGAHN

(1010 TO 1364)

FOR a thousand years the records of the history of Burma are extremely scanty. In the year 1010 A.D. Anoarhta Soa, one of the heroes of Burmese history, was crowned King of Pagahn, and we begin henceforward to have a more distinct view of the power and state of Pagahn. Under Anoarhta, the kingdom of Burma was consolidated, art and architecture flourished, and the Buddhist religion was reformed and became again paramount in the land. Anoarhta, who had the attributes of a great king, held the debasing dragon-worship in horror, and he welcomed Arahan, a holy Talaing missionary, from Thatun, to the royal city. Through his teaching, Buddhism was established as the state religion in Pagahn. Desiring to possess the Tripika or Buddhist scriptures, which were in the possession of the King of Thatun, Anoarhta sent an ambassador to ask for a copy of the holy volumes. The request was haughtily refused. Angered at this affront, Anoarhta led a large army down the Irrawaddy and besieged Thatun. The city finally surrendered and was utterly destroyed; its king was made captive, and all its relics, golden images, sacred books, and historic chronicles were carried to Pagahn. The land of Pegu became subject to Burma, and remained so for two hundred years. A.D. 1010.

Actuated either by religious zeal or ambition, King Anoarhta carried his arms into China and Bengal, and north-

wards into the Shan States, the power of which he broke. He died in 1052 A.D., and was succeeded by his son Soalu, who was killed in battle soon afterwards, when his brother Kyansittha succeeded to the throne.

It was in his reign that the magnificent temple Ananda was built, the ruins of which are still one of the glories of Burma. His grandson Alaungsithâ, who succeeded him, built the Shweku Temple at Pagahn in 1085. This king reigned for seventy-five years, and his kingdom extended from the delta of the Irrawaddy to the mountain fastnesses of the Shans on the north. There was peace in the land, and the glorious ruins of Pagahn testify to the greatness of the city at this date. The administration of the law was improved by Alaungsithâ, and the country seems to have been well governed. In his old age he was troubled by the evil deeds of his sons, who rebelled against him; and after a long and prosperous reign he was murdered by his second son in the temple he had caused to be built.

It will be remembered that in the original settlement of Burma by the Kshatriya kings, one of the sons of Abhi Raja migrated at the head of a band of followers to Arakan, and there founded a kingdom. The situation of Arakan between the Bay of Bengal and the high range of mountains which divides it from Burma proper, secured it a certain immunity from attack, and for centuries Arakan pursued its own course of development uninfluenced, except by emigrants from Bengal. That, in pre-Christian and early Christian eras, it had attained to a certain level of civilisation and art, is evidenced by the remains of buildings still existing on the high plateau of Kyauk-pandaung, and by the famous brazen statue of Buddha, which is said to have been cast in the year 180 A.D. The first invasion of Arakan from Burma we hear of in the year 1103, when the Prince of Arakan, who was a refugee at the court of Pagahn, induced the Burmese king to send an army

into the country to replace him on the throne of his fathers; which expedition was entirely successful.

At the death of Alaungsithâ in 1160, the parricide Narathu took possession of the throne, and retained it by the murder of his elder brother. He slew his stepmother, the daughter of an Indian prince, with his own hand. This act was revenged by eight soldiers, who, disguised as Brahmins, obtained admission to the King's presence, under the pretence of blessing him. They slew him, and then all committed suicide. In the reign of his successor, the temples called Gaudapalen and Tsulamani were built, and in the following reign the Boadi Temple was completed. A.D. 1160.

The vast ruins of Pagahn at the present day and the splendid architecture of the temples bear witness to the high level of true art to which the Burmese had at this time attained. Communications were kept up with Ceylon and with Bengal, and it is doubtless the fact that Burma was influenced by the art and learning of these countries.

But the days of Pagahn were numbered. The rumours of its magnificence and learning had spread into other countries, and the great Chinese emperor Kublai Khan determined to humble the haughty Burmans. He sent ambassadors to Pagahn to demand gold and silver vessels as tribute, declaring that as King Anoarahta had made such gifts to China, homage was due. The ambassadors who conveyed this insolent demand were seized by the Burmese king and put to death. Kublai Khan resolved to punish this outrage, and assembling a large army he marched into Burma. A stout resistance was made, but the Burmese were defeated and routed at Male. The army fled to the capital, which was not prepared for defence; and the King, afterwards nicknamed Tarukpyemeng—the King who fled from the Taruk—abandoned the city and escaped to Bassein, where he is stated to have lived in extravagant luxury, while the Mongol army devastated the country and plundered

A.D. 1284. Pagahn. Unable to obtain supplies, Kublai Khan retired with his army, having inflicted a severe lesson on the Burmans. The King returned to Prome, where he was compelled to take poison by one of his sons.

The kingdom of Pagahn fell to pieces. Luxury and success had sapped the life of the nation, and the building of magnificent temples to Buddha had not sufficed to enforce the simplicity and austerity of life taught by his religion. As has happened again and again in the history of nations, the hardy and bold men of the mountain races came to the front, as the luxurious cities of the plains declined; and in the land of Burma the men of the Shan race now grew all-powerful. Three Shan brothers became strong governors of States; by the treachery of Queen Soa they were also paramount in Pagahn, and they extended their sway from Manipur in the north to Prome in the south. Their descendants founded the
A.D. 1312. cities and kingdoms of Panya and Sagaing. Internecine strife, however, arose, and within a century these kingdoms came to an end. In 1364 the city of Ava was founded by King Thadomengbya, who determined to reconstitute the Burmese kingdom.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE STRUGGLE FOR SUPREMACY BETWEEN PEGU AND BURMA

(1231 TO 1541)

IN the later days of the Pagahn monarchy the Talaings of Pegu had become insubordinate. A wealthy Shan merchant had in 1281 usurped supreme power and became King of Martaban, under the name of Wareru. He succeeded in establishing a dynasty, and Pegu became once more entirely free of Burma.

In the north the kingdom of Burma became in 1385 consolidated under Meng Kyiswa-Soakai, King of Ava. The old racial struggle between the Talaings and Burmans arose again in all its fierceness, and the fact that each country was now governed by kings of the Shan race did not prevent preparations for war.

The King of Burma invaded Pegu two successive years, but was repulsed and obliged to retreat. The King of Pegu retaliated by invading Burma, and carried his victorious arms to the walls of Ava. He made an unsuccessful attempt to take Prome, which it is said was protected by guns on A.D. 1404. the ramparts. The garrison is also stated to have been armed with muskets, but Colonel Phayre suggests that these were probably firearms which were held in the hand when discharged. Finding themselves equally matched, the Kings of Burma and Pegu finally determined to make peace. They swore friendship to one another in the pagoda at

Prome, and the boundary of the two kingdoms was drawn south of the city. War, however, soon broke out again and raged for several years. There were invasions and counter-invasions, until the two countries were exhausted. Peace was at last proclaimed, and each of the Kings devoted their remaining years to religion and works of merit. They died within a
A.D. 1422. year of one another, about 1422.

The war was, however, renewed by their descendants, and for the next twenty years the history of Burma and Pegu is that of a series of internecine quarrels and raids, and of contests with the Shans. From the midst of the confusion and strife rise two stately figures—those of Queen Sheng Soaba and her monkish son-in-law Dhammazedi. Sheng Soaba was sister of Binya Ran, Prince of Pegu, and was married for state reasons to the King of Burma, though she had a husband already. On his death she married a nobleman. Dissatisfied with her position at the Court of Ava, she returned to Pegu, where she was warmly received by her brother the King. Her son by her first husband was put on the throne at the King's death, but reigned only a short time. All the male heirs to the throne being now dead, the nation unanimously requested Sheng Soaba to take the sovereign power, and she was accordingly crowned Queen of Pegu. In her retinue from Ava was a monk, who became a layman and married the queen's daughter. At the death of Sheng Soaba he became King under the
A.D. 1460. name of Dhammazedi in 1460. Of this monarch Colonel Phayre says: "In Pegu Dhammazedi reigned in peace for the long period of thirty-one years. Though brought up from early youth in the seclusion of a Buddhist monastery until he was more than forty years old, he reigned with dignity and wisdom; his moderation reconciled to his rule the diverse interests of the grandees of the land. Embassies were sent to him from the neighbouring countries and from Ceylon.

Though he made no wars, yet he extended the boundaries of the kingdom eastward, and after death he received the funeral honours of a Chakravarti or universal monarch. The strict observances of Buddhism were in his case disregarded, and a pagoda was built over his bones, which was crowned and gilded as for an object of worship. He was succeeded by his son, who took the title of Binya Ran, and enjoyed among his subjects the respect and love which belonged to a grandson of Sheng Soaba."

Binya Ran reigned for thirty-five years, and the land knew rest. He is accused of but one act of aggression, namely, an attack on the rising city of Taungu. European travellers speak of him as a prince "of great magnificence and generosity," and, "of such humanity and affability that a child might come to his presence and speak with him." A.D. 1500.

While the kingdom of Pegu enjoyed this long period of peace and prosperity, matters were going from bad to worse in Burma. Rent by the wars and quarrels of kings and governors, constantly at war with the Shan chieftains, and engaged in repelling invasions from China, the kingdom declined and fell under the dominion of the warlike Shans. Burmese noblemen and men of rank fled to Taungu, which presently became a powerful province.

Taungu is situated between the rivers Irrawaddy and Salwen, on a strip of country watered by the river Sitang, and bounded on the east by high hills, which have been inhabited from time immemorial by the wild tribes of the Karens. The Burmans, who would not submit to the tyranny of the Shan kings at Ava, fled to Taungu. As the kingdom of Ava declined, Taungu increased in power, so much so that presently the governors or kinglets of this province defied alike the Kings of Ava and Pegu. Towards the end of the fifteenth century, the throne of Taungu was seized by Meng Kyinyo, a descendant of the last King of Pagahn. He

built the new city of Taungu, made an alliance with the King of Prome against Ava, and became the hope of the Burmese people. His son, Tabeng Shwehti, had the ambition to determine to restore the united empire of Burma. Pegu was first attacked, and after several repulses and a desperate defence, and battles fought on land and sea, the capital
A.D. 1538. surrendered, and its King was driven beyond the frontier. The governor of the little province of Taungu then became King of Pegu, and he and his general Bureng Naung played great parts in the restoration of the ancient power of the empire of Burma.

Light is now thrown on the condition and history of Pegu and Burma by European travellers and chroniclers. The Portuguese traders had penetrated into the golden land from Goa, and Portuguese commanders aided the Talaings in their naval fights. In the fascinating pages of Balbi, Frederike, and Pinto, we have vivid pictures of the royal state, the magnificence, and the barbarism of the Kings of Pegu, Taungu, and Ava.

CHAPTER XXXII

THE FALL OF MARTABAN, DESCRIBED BY AN EYE-WITNESS, IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

(1540–1550)

AFTER devoting himself for some time to the cares of the state, and in making earnest efforts to conciliate the Talang nobles, Tabeng Shwehti determined to bring Martaban into submission. This port had become, since the opening of the trade route to Europe round the Cape of Good Hope, an export and trading centre of great importance. The city, which was of extreme magnificence and wealth, was situated at the mouth of the river Salwen, opposite to the present port of Maulmain. It was the capital of a large extent of territory, and was governed by a viceroy from Pegu called the Soabinya or Chaubainhaa.

Finding that Martaban was very strongly defended both by land and sea, and impossible to take by assault, Bureng Naung determined to invest it closely, and to let famine do its work. Portuguese captains and adventurers lent their aid both to the besiegers and the besieged. For seven months the city was closely surrounded, till the garrison was reduced by famine to the lowest pitch of weakness. The treasures of the Viceroy were said to be fabulous, but they failed to buy him the support of the Portuguese in the besieging force under Paulo de Seixas. When Cayeyro, the Portuguese captain, with his followers deserted to the enemy, and one of his own commanders with 4000 men did the same, the Viceroy, in

despair, gave himself, his wife, children, city, treasures, and kingdom, unreservedly into the hands of the King of Pegu, trusting to the mercy of the monarch, and receiving from him assurances of consideration and safe-conduct.

Ferdinand Mendez Pinto,[1] a Portuguese adventurer and traveller, gives a graphic account of the fall of Martaban, at which he was present. He writes: "The news was published throughout all the camp with a great deal of joy, and the next morning all the equipage and train that the King had in his quarter was set forth to view. First of all there were to be seen fourscore and six field-tents, wonderful rich, each of them being environed with thirty elephants, ranked in two files, as if they had been ready to fight, with castles on their backs full of banners, and their *panores* fastened to their trunks; the whole number of them amounted unto two thousand five hundred and fourscore. Not far from them were twelve thousand and five hundred *Bramaas*,[2] all mounted on horses, very richly accoutred. With the order which they kept, they enclosed all the King's quarter in four files, and were all armed in corslets, or coats of maze, with lances, cymitars, and gilded bucklers. After these horse followed four files of foot, all *Bramaas*, being in number above twenty thousand. For all the other soldiers of the camp, there were so many as they could not be counted, and they marched all in order after their captains. In this publique muster

[1] With regard to the historical value of Pinto's account of what he saw in Pegu and Burma, Colonel Phayre, the historian of Burma, says that the reputation obtained by Pinto for untruthfulness is unjust, and that the events he narrates are found, after comparison with native and other accounts, to be correctly told. As to the wealth of the kings of Indo-China and the numbers of their armies, he could but repeat what he was told by natives, and the figures given in his narrative are doubtless exaggerated. His geography of the country is also somewhat confusing; but otherwise his accounts of the siege of Martaban and of Prome, of the great state kept by the King of Pegu, and of the magnificence and wealth of Laos, are all substantially correct.

[2] Burmans.

were to be seen a world of banners and rich colours, and such a number of instruments of war sounded, that the noise thereof, together with that which the soldiers made, was most dreadful, and so great that it was not possible to hear one another. Now for that the King of *Bramaa* would this day make shew of his greatness in the reddition of the Chaubainhaa, he gave express command that all the captains which were strangers, with their men, should put on their best clothes and arms; and so ranged in two files, they should make as it were a kind of street, through which the Chaubainhaa might pass. This accordingly was put into execution, and this street took beginning from the city gate, and reached as far as the King's tent, being in length about three-quarters of a league, or better. In this street there were six-and-thirty thousand strangers, of two and forty different nations, namely, *Portuguese, Grecians, Venetians, Turks, Janizaries, Jews, Armenians, Tartars, Mogores, Abyssins, Raizbutos, Nobins, Coracones, Persians, Tuparaas, Gizares, Tanacos, Malabares, Jaos, Achems, Moens, Siams, Lussons* of the island *Borneo, Chacomas, Arracons, Predins, Papuaais, Selebres, Mindancas, Pegus, Bramaas,* and many others whose names I know not. All the nations were ranked according to the *Xemimbrums* order, whereby the Portugals were placed in the vantgard, which was next to the gate of the city, where the Chaubainhaa was to come. After them followed the Armenians, then the Janizaries and Turks, and so the rest."

In spite of the promises made to the Viceroy by the King, he and his family were cruelly murdered, and the city of Martaban given over to pillage. To quote our author again: "Thereupon the ancient city of Martaban was delivered over to the mercy of the soldiers, who, at the shooting off of a cannon, which was the signal thereof, entered presently into it pell-mell, and so thronging together, that at the entering into the gates, it is said above three hundred men were

stifled; for as there was there an infinite company of men of war of different nations, the most of them without king, without law, without the fear and knowledge of God, they went all to the spoil with closed eyes, and therein showed themselves so cruel minded that the thing they made least reckoning of was to kill a hundred men for a crown; and truly the disorder was such in the city, as the King himself was fain to go thither six or seven times in person for to appease it. The sack of the city endured three days and a half, with so much avarice and cruelty of these barbarous enemies, as it was wholly pillaged, without anything left that might give an eye cause to covet it. That done, the King, with a new ceremony of proclamation, caused the Chaubainhaa's palace, together with thirty or forty very fair houses of his principal lords, and all the pagodas and temples of the city, to be demolished, so that according to the opinion of many, it was thought, that the loss of those magnificent edifices amounted to above ten millions of gold; wherewith not yet contented he commanded all the buildings of the city that were still afoot to be set on fire, which by the violence of the wind kindled in such manner as in that one night there remained nothing unburnt, yea, the very walls, towers, and bulwarks were consumed even to the foundations. The number of them that were killed in this sack was threescore thousand persons, but was that of the prisoners much less? There was one hundred and forty thousand houses, and seventeen hundred temples burnt, wherein were consumed threescore thousand statues or idols of divers metals. There was found in this city six thousand pieces of artillery, what of brass and iron; an hundred thousand quintals of pepper, and as much of sanders, benjamin, lacre, lignum, aloes, camphine, silk, and many other kinds of rich merchandise, but above all an infinite number of commodities which were brought hither from the Indies, in above a hundred vessels

of Cambaya, Achem, Melinda, Cerlam, and of all the Streight of Meckua, of the Leguios, and of China. As for gold, silver, and precious stones and jewels that were found there, one really knows not what they were, for those things are ordinarily concealed, wherefore it shall suffice me to say, that so much as the King of Bramaa had for certain of the Chaubainhaa's treasures amounted to a hundred millions of gold."

Allowing for the exaggeration of travellers' tales, these extracts from the writings of an eye-witness of the siege and sack of Martaban enable us to realise in a lively manner the magnificence, opulence, and barbarism of the cities of the land of Burma in the middle of the sixteenth century.

The King returned to Pegu, and determining to take Prome, he collected an immense army, and conveyed it up the river in boats. The King of Ava, the Shan chieftains, and the Arakanese, all came to the help of besieged Prome, but were defeated and repulsed by the aid of the Portuguese and of firearms. The city was then closely invested. Inspired by the courageous Queen, a determined defence was made, but Prome was finally betrayed by one of the captains; the King and Queen and their ministers were massacred with great cruelty, and the city given up to pillage. Tabeng Shwehti then carried his arms against Ava, and gained possession of the ancient capital of Pagahn. Unsuccessful expeditions against Arakan and Siam, in which there was great loss of life, so disgusted the Talaings with their tyrant that he was assassinated. His faithful General, Bureng Naung, was then made King, but only after he had fought with and subdued all other pretenders to the throne of Pegu.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE GREAT KING BURENG NAUNG AND THE HALCYON DAYS OF PEGU

(1554–1752)

BURENG NAUNG carried out the splendid scheme of uniting the whole empire of Pegu and Burma under one rule. He besieged and took Ava, and extended his sway as far as Bhamo. He made Pegu the capital city, and beautified it with magnificent palaces, of which the European travellers of that day speak with wonder and admiration. An expedition against Siam was successful, and the King was
A.D. 1564. taken prisoner. Bureng Naung at last subdued all his enemies, and for three years the kingdom knew peace. Pegu became one of the most splendid cities of the East, and the centre of a prosperous trade with Europe, India, and Malacca. But war broke out again. The King of Siam, who had been allowed to return to his own country as a monk, revolted. An army of 200,000 men was collected and, led by the King in person, Siam was invaded. After a most exhausting struggle the country was subdued, and Bureng Naung returned to Pegu with but a small remnant of his great army.

The "King of kings" now devoted himself to the encouragement of commerce and the dispensation of justice. The Venetian traveller, Cæsar Fredericke, thus describes the great monarch:[1] "The King sitteth every day in person to hear the suits of his subjects up aloft in a great hall on a tribunal seat with his barons around him, while on the ground, 'forty

[1] Purchas' "Pilgrims."

paces distant,' are the petitioners with their supplications in their hands, which are made of long leaves of a tree, and a present or gift, according to the weightiness of these matters." He adds: "The King of Pegu hath not any army or power by sea; but in the land, for people, dominions, gold, and silver, he far exceeds the Great Turk in treasures and strength."

Later the glory and renown of Bureng Naung was increased by his receipt, with great pomp, of the relic of a holy tooth from Ceylon.

The whole of the country of Burma, from the Shan hills to Martaban, was subject to the "King of kings," with the exception of Arakan, hence Bureng Naung burned to add this kingdom to those already conquered. He gathered together a large fleet of 1300 vessels, and landing on the Arakanese coast, the army was marched to Sandoway. Ambassadors were sent thence to the Emperor Akbar, possibly to ascertain if the occupation of Arakan would be looked upon by him as an act of hostility; but while waiting in Arakan, the great Bureng Naung died in 1581.

His eldest son, the Yuva Raja, succeeded to the throne A.D. 1581. of the great empire. His cruelties soon disgusted his followers. Suspecting that many of his officers were in conspiracy against him, he caused them, their wives, and children, to be burned alive. Gasparo Balbi, a Venetian merchant, was witness to this dreadful scene, and speaks of his compassion for the little children who were burnt. Ava first revolted and was subdued; Siam then threw off the foreign yoke; Prome rebelled; the King of Taungu joined the King of Arakan and seized the port of Syriam. The capital was then invested, the King was taken prisoner, and the splendid city of Pegu, with the golden palace of Bureng Naung, was plundered and reduced to ruins. The empire was divided up, and "thus the great empire of united Pegu and Burma, which a generation before had excited the wonder of Euro-

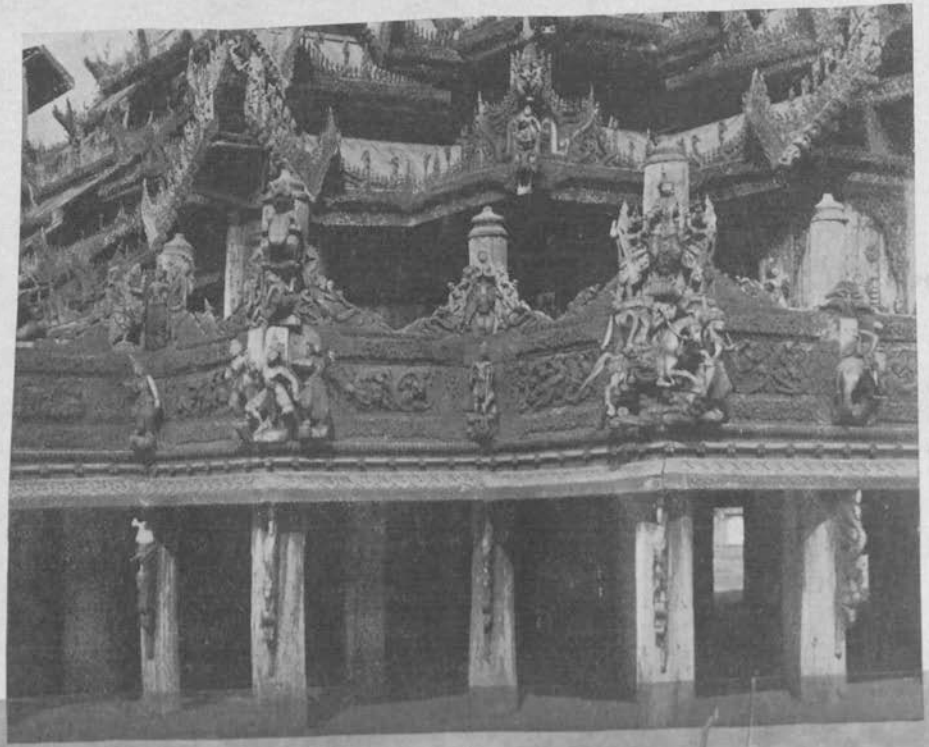
A.D. 1599. pean travellers, was utterly broken up, and the wide delta of the Irrawaddy, with a soil fertile as Egypt, and in a geographical position commanding the outlet of a great natural highway, was abandoned by those who might claim to represent the ancient rulers, and left to be parcelled out by petty local chiefs and European adventurers."[1]

The shores of Arakan and Pegu now began to swarm with Portuguese adventurers, and among them one named Philip de Brito rose to great power. Appointed by the King of Arakan as his agent at the port of Syriam, he adopted the well-known tactics of his race. He built a brick custom-house, and then a fort to protect the custom-house. He next became governor of the new settlement, and applied to the Governor of Goa for leave to hold the town for the Portuguese. After having defeated an Arakanese force that tried to retake the town, he so conciliated the Talaing chiefs that they invited him to become King of Pegu; and he took possession of the kingdom in the name of the King of Portugal in 1604. De Brito soon, however, alienated his subjects by his rapacity and intolerance.

In the meantime, the grandson of the great King Bureng Naung had been gaining power in ancient Burma. Ava, Prome, Taungu, and the Shan States had acknowledged his sovereignty, and he had vowed to capture De Brito and recover Pegu. He closely invested Syriam; the garrison was reduced by famine, and the gates were opened by treachery. De Brito was taken prisoner and impaled alive, and his followers were sent as slaves to Ava, where their descendants were known two hundred years later as native Christians.

The conqueror, Maha Dhamma Raja, now determined to recover the whole of the empire ruled over by his grandfather, and he sent expeditions to Martaban and Zimme, which submitted. Having consolidated once more the great empire

[1] Phayre's "History of Burma," p. 123.



CARVED WOOD DECORATIONS OF A KIOUNG.

of Pegu and Burma, the King turned his attention to internal administration, and he is said to have ruled his vast territory with justice and moderation. He made his brothers tributary kings at Ava and Prome. He received envoys from Persia and Bengal, and was respected and feared. He died, however, a violent death, by the hand of his son. He was succeeded by his brother Thado Dhamma Raja, who made Ava the capital. Here, in 1636, he built a great pagoda known as the Khoung-moo-daw, in which was enshrined an image of Buddha in pure gold, the King giving his own weight in the precious metal for the purpose.

From this time and for the next hundred years the power of the Burmese empire steadily declined. The northern country was devastated by invasions from China and Manipur, which penetrated as far as the capital. Zimme and Martaban were lost, and the Talaings, encouraged by the decrepitude of the imperial power, elected a Gwé Shan, who had been a Buddhist monk, as their king. This ruler made himself A.D. 1746. greatly beloved by a distracted people. The national spirit revived, expeditions were organised against the traditional enemy Burma, and the cities of Prome and Taungu were wrested from Ava. To the regret of all, the Gwé Shan King suddenly decided to retire into private life. The Talaings then elected Binya Dala, a man of obscure birth, as their King. He boldly proclaimed his intention of restoring the ancient power of the kingdom of Pegu, and he appointed Talaban his commander-in-chief. Pegu was too much impoverished to furnish the necessary army to conquer Ava, and only desultory warfare was carried on for three years. At last an army of 60,000 men was collected, and, aided by Dutch and Portuguese adventurers, Talaban led his forces up the Irrawaddy. The city of Ava was invested. No real resistance was made, the King was made captive and sent to Pegu, and Ava was burnt to the ground. Talaban was left in command.

CHAPTER XXXIV

ALOMPRA AND HIS DYNASTY—THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE BURMESE EMPIRE

(1752–1790)

A PROCLAMATION was issued calling upon the governors of the northern districts to submit and swear allegiance to the King of Pegu. Among the officers was one who refused to yield submission to a foreign power. He was the deputy of the lord of a district to the north of Ava, and a noted hunter in his native village. This recalcitrant officer was subsequently known as Alaunghprâ or Alompra, the saviour of his country and the founder of a dynasty of kings. Intensely patriotic, he refused to appear when summoned by the Talaing government, and arming a few faithful followers, he slew the company of Talaings deputed to parley with him. He then fortified his native village Muthsobo, and, joined by a number of followers, boldly came forward as the patriot deliverer of his country from foreign rule. He defeated Talaban, who attacked his fortified village, and proclaiming himself to be of the royal race, he took the title of Alaunghprâ (the Victorious). It was a name to conjure with. The Burmese chieftains and people rallied around him, and as soon as he felt strong enough he attacked Ava. The power of the rebel hunter-captain had been miscalculated; the principal forces had been previously withdrawn from Ava, and the Talaing commander, seeing there was no chance of holding the city, abandoned it in the night.

Alompra entered Ava in royal state. Prome was then

A TROUPE OF WOMEN DANCING AT A PWÉ.

taken, lost, and taken again; and, advancing his troops down the Irrawaddy, Alompra drove the Talaings backward; and, in spite of the reputation and generalship of Talaban, he subdued both banks of the river as far as Dagohn. Here, on the plain beneath the great golden pagoda, he laid out the city of Rangoon, which he intended should be the new port of Pegu.

Alompra now turned his attention to Syriam, which, under European influence, had become an important port, where both the French and English had established factories. The English favoured the Talaings, as did also the French at first. Syriam was finally taken, and Monsieur Bourno, the head of the French factory, was put to death. Alompra then led his victorious troops to Pegu and laid siege to the city. The Talaings fought with the bravery of desperation, but the city was reduced to the greatest straits by famine. The King sought to obtain terms from the conqueror, and sent him his maiden daughter as a peace-offering; but Alompra was determined to give Pegu no quarter, and would accept no compromise. The city was finally taken by assault and given over to pillage. The King was taken prisoner, and the buildings razed to the ground.

The English now appear for the first time prominently in the history of Burma. England had in Burma, as in other parts of the East, become possessed of the heritage of commerce created by the Portuguese, and she had extended her factories and trade from India to the southern shores of Pegu. A factory had been established at Syriam, the directors of which had shown much sympathy with the Talaings in their struggle with the Burmese. On the return of Alompra from the conquest of the capital of Pegu, he was met at Donabyu by Ensign Lister, who came to ask for a treaty of commerce. He obtained for the East India Company the island of Negrais and land for a factory at Bassein. Two years later there was

an abortive insurrection of the Talaings, and the English were suspected of aiding the rebels. The *Arcot*, an English ship, was seized, and Mr. Wintehill was taken prisoner and sent to Prome, but he was afterwards released on paying a heavy ransom. On being informed that the agents of the East India Company at Negrais had sold arms and ammunition to the Talaings, Alompra ordered the settlement to be destroyed. The factory was suddenly attacked, and ten Europeans and one hundred native Indians were massacred. Thus began, through the intrigues of a commercial community, that contest which ended in the conquest of Burma by the English. But not yet. The star of Alompra was still in the ascendant.

Thousands of Talaings had escaped across the frontier to Siam, and to this day the Mon or Talaing language is more spoken in Siam than in the ancient kingdom of Pegu. Alompra now determined to bring the proud kingdom of Siam to submission. Against the advice alike of astrologers and officers he persisted in this enterprise. He concentrated his army at Martaban, and marched down the coast to Tavoy and Mergui, passed the port of Tenasserim, and turned northwards. After a battle with the Siamese in which he was victorious, he laid siege to the capital, Ayuthia. The city was well prepared for defence. Before many days were past, Alompra was stricken with a mortal sickness. A retreat was at once ordered. The King was carried in a litter, but he died on nearing his own domains. His body was borne to Rangoon, and burned
A.D. 1760. with the funeral rites of a Chakravarti or universal monarch.

Alompra was but forty-six years of age when he died. He was a man of a Napoleonic cast of character, of indomitable courage, and iron will. Though he was of obscure birth and his country had sunk to the lowest ebb of decadence, he raised it once more to the position of a nation, and governed an united Burma which extended from Manipur to Martaban.

He left six sons, and a will stating that he wished them all to ascend the throne in turn.

His son Namigdoagyî succeeded him. In this reign the first mission was sent from the British Government in India to Burma; and Captain Alves, who commanded one of the ships which was anchored off Negrais at the time of the massacre in the English factory, came to Sagaing with letters from the Governors of Bengal and Madras. He was treated with great insolence, and failed to obtain any redress; but land was, however, granted for a factory at Bassein.

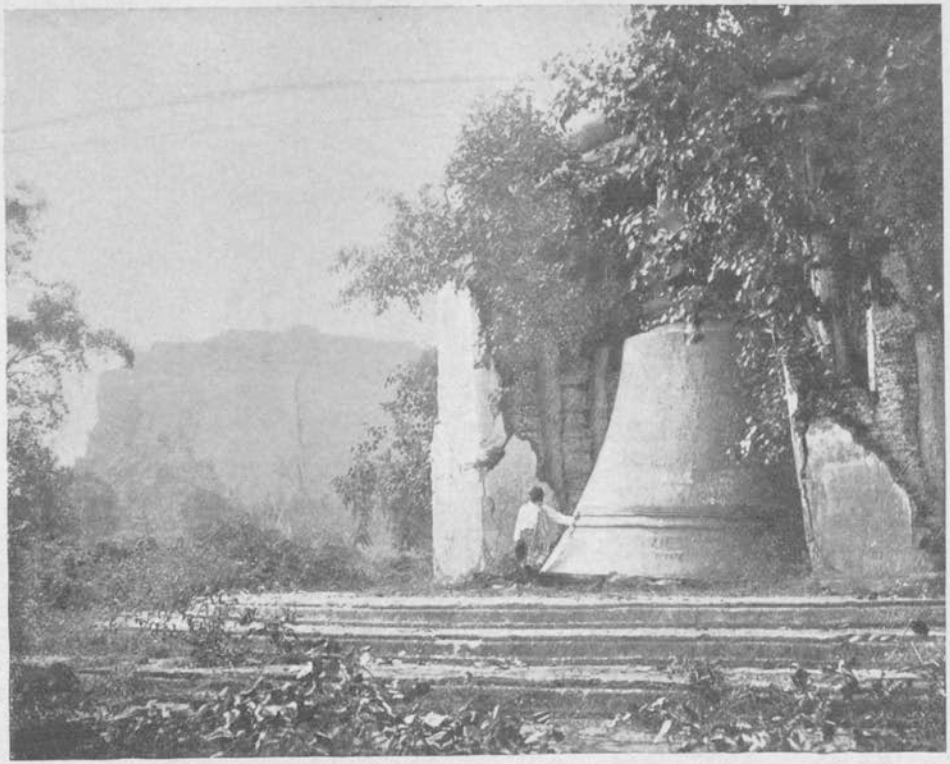
ALOMPRA REPRESENTED AS A BUDDHA.

Namigdoagyî died in 1763, and was succeeded by his brother Myedu Meng. Ava was rebuilt and again became the seat of government. The conquest of Siam was the dearest ambition of the king's heart. Two armies were marched into the country and joined forces before the capital city, Ayuthia, which was closely besieged for over a year. The garrison, reduced by famine, was overcome; the king was killed, and the city entirely destroyed by fire. The army was recalled in all haste to resist an invasion of the Chinese from Yunnan in 1765. The struggle between the Chinese and the Burmese was long and severe. Four times China sent vast armies into Burma, which succeeded in penetrating almost to the walls of Ava. The resistance made by the Burmese to the enormous forces arrayed against

them showed much military genius. After three years' continuous fighting the Chinese were defeated and sued for peace. The Chinese army was then so completely in the power of the Burmese that the officers clamoured that no quarter should be given. Maha Thihathura, the commander-in-chief, counselled measures of conciliation, and a treaty of peace and commerce was drawn up and agreed to on
A.D. 1769. December 13, 1769. The Chinese were allowed to retreat across the boundary, escorted by a Burmese corps. The King was so angered at the general having allowed the Chinese army to retire, that on his return to Ava the offender was banished from the capital for a month. Trade between the two countries was, however, peacefully re-established and carried on.

War was now made against Siam and Manipur, both of which countries were said to have revolted. The northern army, after ravaging Manipur, pushed into Kachar, and thence across the mountains to Jaintia, thus giving another proof of the warlike character of the Burmese. In order to be nearer the seat of war with Siam, the King hurried to Rangoon, where, with great ceremonial, a new gold htee or crown was placed on the Shway Dagohn pagoda. In the midst of the Siamese war the king died. After various insurrections, court intrigues, conspiracies, and kings who reigned but a short time, Bodoahpra, the third son of Alompra, was placed on the throne. He obtained his crown by the most ruthless acts of cruelty, and fearing that the palace at Ava might be tainted by an evil influence, he laid out and built a new royal city called Amaurapoora, about six miles north of Ava. The King with his court moved into the palace, which was in the centre of the city, with great ceremony, on May 10, 1783.

Bodoahpra inherited a great empire, extending from Mekong in the north to Tenasserim in the south. Arakan alone resisted his sway. This country was distracted by



THE GREAT BELL AND THE MONSTER PAGODA AT MENGOHN,
ERECTED BY KING BODOAHPRA.

civil strife, and in despair the nobles had beseeched Bodoahpra to restore order.

Two armies and a flotilla of ships were consequently despatched from Amaurapoora. The expedition was entirely successful, and the country was conquered and annexed. The King, ambitious of military glory, now determined to invade Siam under the pretence of exacting tribute. A force of 100,000 men was massed at Martaban. Bodoahpra pushed on operations with great impatience, with the result that he presently found himself in the midst of an enemy's country with insufficient supplies of food for his numerous force. Thousands of the invaders died from starvation. The Siamese, led by their King, attacked with great spirit; two columns of the Burmese army were almost annihilated, and a retreat was ordered. Bodoahpra escaped to Martaban, and thence back to Ava.

Having failed ignominiously in this warlike enterprise, he now determined to obtain immortal fame by building the largest pagoda the world had ever seen. The site selected was at Mengohn, about fifteen miles north of the capital. Here he erected a temporary palace, and personally superintended the work. A gigantic brick building was commenced, which, though only completed to a third of its intended size, is declared by Colonel Yule to be one of the largest masses of brick and mortar in the world. After the expenditure of great labour and much money in erecting this monster pagoda, it was abandoned. Twenty years later it was rent from end to end by a great earthquake. An immense bell, weighing ninety tons, was founded and suspended near the pagoda.

CHAPTER XXXV

THE FIRST BURMESE WAR AND THE TREATY OF YANDABO

(1794–1826)

THE Arakanese had, as already told, sought the protection of Burma, but they soon discovered that they had not made an advantageous exchange of governors. The native chiefs rebelled against the tyrannical government of Burma, and fled into Chittagong. In pursuit of these rebels the Burmese general crossed the boundary, and intrenched his
A.D. 1795. forces on British territory. Major-General Erskine was sent from Calcutta with troops to oppose this act of aggression. The Burmese General was persuaded by him to withdraw, on the promise being given that the fugitives should be given up to the government of Ava, which was accordingly done. Captain Symes was then sent, by the British India Government to Amaurapoora, on a mission to the King of Burma, to settle the difficulties about the emigrants, and to obtain a treaty of commerce. In the obstinate misapprehension that he did not represent the British Government, but only a trading company in India, a system of etiquette and ceremony was adopted, calculated to degrade the British envoy in the eyes of the Burmese, and served as a precedent when subsequent missions were sent from the Indian Government. The Governor-General's letter was left unanswered, and the royal permit obtained to trade with Burma proved to be a document of little value. Captain Hiram Cox was sent the next year to Rangoon as Resident, but he was treated with so much discourtesy that he withdrew.

Again there was in 1802 a repetition of the trouble in Arakan. Thousands of emigrants fled into the district of Chittagong, and a Burmese force crossed the boundary and tried to compel the fugitives to return. The British Government would only agree to promise that emigrants should not be allowed to raid into Arakan; but King Bodoahpra threatened an invasion of British territory if the fugitives were not given up. Colonel Symes was again sent to Mengohn to obtain a retractation of this threat, which had been embodied in a letter to the Governor-General, but he was treated with marked neglect and great indignity. Captain Canning was then sent as Resident at Rangoon, but was so ill received that he was obliged to leave.

Raids on the Arakan frontier by emigrants living on British soil became frequent, and the Burmese had just cause of complaint. With a view to undermine British power in India, Bodoahpra sent secret missions to Delhi, Benares, and even to Kashmir, under the pretence of obtaining holy books, and he even nourished designs of conquering Bengal. The last military expedition Bodoahpra undertook was into Manipur, when the Kubo valley was annexed. He died in the year 1819, having reigned thirty-five years.

Father Sangermano thus describes this king: "His very countenance is the index of a mind ferocious and inhuman in the highest degree, . . . and it would not be an exaggeration to assert that during his reign more victims have fallen by the hand of the executioner than by the sword of the common enemy." When it was pointed out to Bodoahpra that his wars had greatly depopulated the country, he replied, "It would matter little if all the men were dead, for then we might enrol and arm the women." Of such stuff were the kings who brought the kingdom of Burma to ruin.

The grandson of Bodoahpra ascended the throne and took the name of Hpagyidoa. Following the policy of his grand- A.D. 1819.

father, he determined to keep control of Manipur; and on the Raja showing some signs of revolt, an army under Maha Bandula was despatched to that country. The Raja fled to Kachar. Assam subsequently was conquered and declared a province of Burma. The operations of the Burmese army in Assam and Manipur in 1824 brought it into collision with the British Government on the frontier. The Burmese gained an advantage over a British force on the Barah river, and consequently became filled with the arrogance of victory. At the same time the old frontier quarrels in Arakan were revived, and raids from Chittagong recurred. The Burmese claimed an island at the mouth of the Naf river which had long been considered British territory. Its guard was attacked, and half of the men killed. Maha Bandula was sent to Arakan with 6000 men. He crossed the frontier line, attacked the British force at Ramu, and drove it from its position with great slaughter.

[A.D. 1824. War was now declared between the two countries, for the British Government felt that this restless and turbulent border neighbour must be taught a lesson; it was decided, however, that while the war should be continued on the borders of Assam and Arakan, it should also be carried at once by a bold stroke to the very walls of the capital of Ava.

This Burmese campaign was entered into with a light heart, and we read with what alacrity and high expectations preparations for war were made at Calcutta and Madras. Notwithstanding the reports which had been made from time to time by envoys and traders, the East India Company knew little of Burma, and they set out to conquer the country in the belief that the war would be only a kind of military promenade. Men to the number of 11,500, under the command of General Sir Archibald Campbell, were rapidly despatched in warships and transports, which sailed up the river to Rangoon. The guns on the wharf were soon dismounted;

but on landing the British troops on May 11, 1824, Rangoon was found to be entirely deserted. The pagoda, which stands on a mound of considerable height and extent, was made the central fortress, and became the key of the position. The rainy season came on, and the General found it difficult to get food for the troops, and impossible to obtain the means of transport in the deserted city. In making a reconnaissance, a stockade in the woods north of Rangoon was discovered, and was carried at the point of the bayonet. A stockade extending for a mile along the river at Kyunyindaing, or Kimmendine, was unsuccessfully attacked. The British returned the next day to the attack with heavy guns, only to find the stockade deserted. Possession was then taken of Kimmendine, and later other extensive stockades at the junction of the Hlaing and Ranhlaing rivers were stormed and taken.

Sickness now began to make great havoc among the invading force, the exposure of the troops to the wet causing fever and dysentery to break out with extreme virulence. As it was impossible to advance up the Irrawaddy at flood-time, Syriam, Tavoy, and Mergui were conquered and occupied.

The King of Burma and his ministers heard with no dismay of the arrival of the English fleet and army before Rangoon. Long accustomed to be successful in battles with their neighbours, the Chinese, Assamese, and Siamese, they believed that their army would soon drive the English into the sea. They were quite ignorant of the power and resources of the British nation, and chose to look upon the Indian Government as a trading body with designs upon the far East. The success of the British arms, and the evident determination of the invaders to stay, began to alarm the king. Maha Bandula and his army were recalled from Arakan, and great preparations were made to prevent the advance of the British force up the Irrawaddy. The Burmese were full of confidence, which was increased by the repulse of an attack by Colonel

Smith, with a column of native troops, on a strong stockade at Kyaikkalo. Maha Bandula, with an army of 60,000 men, now moved down the river, and made a determined attack on the central position of the British, who were strongly intrenched on the mound of the pagoda at Rangoon. He was repulsed with much slaughter. He then retired up the river, and his army was dispersed.

The British General, finding that an advance up the river was so difficult, determined to try and reach the capital by occupying Arakan, and penetrating to the heart of Burma, by crossing the mountains dividing the two countries. An army of 11,000 men, under General Morrison, was sent into Arakan; the city of Myanku was taken, and the pass of Taluk reconnoitred, but it was declared to be too difficult for guns and transport animals. The troops went into cantonments along the coast, where sickness of such a virulent nature broke out that nearly the whole force was destroyed.

The British force had now been eight months at Rangoon, and there had been no communication from the Burmese Government, and no signs of weakness on the part of the people. A movement up the river to Prome was then decided upon. The force was divided into a river party under General Cotton, and a land force was under General Campbell. Bandula was known to be strongly intrenched in a stockade near Donabyu on the river. General Cotton attacked the fortress and was repulsed with some loss. The position of affairs was critical. A message was despatched to Sir Archibald Campbell, who was a day's march up the river on the opposite bank. He returned at once, crossed the Irrawaddy by means of canoes, and joined General Cotton. Preparations were now deliberately made to storm Bandula's strong position. In three weeks earthworks were thrown up on which guns were mounted, and all was ready for assault on the morning of April 2, 1825, when it was found that the

Burmese stockade was deserted. It seemed that Maha Bandula had been killed by a stray shell, and the garrison, dismayed by this disaster and bad omen, had fled. The Burmese stronghold was occupied by the invading army, and the bloodless victory at Donabyu was the decisive action in the war.

The King and Court were thrown into the greatest consternation by the death of Bandula, and by the steady advance of the British forces. The most opposite counsels prevailed at the palace. Finally Menthagyi, the Queen's brother, was appointed General, and made his headquarters at Malwen, above Prome. General Campbell did not, however, give the Burmese army time to mobilise, for he at once marched up the river and took possession of Prome, which was found deserted, on April 4. The rainy season having now commenced, the army went into cantonment. The Peguans soon recovered confidence in the English, and began to return to their homes, and in a short time Prome bore a busier, happier look than it had had for a long period.

In September the Burmese asked for an armistice, and negotiations for peace were entered into. The British demanded the cession of Arakan, Tavoy, and Mergui, and the payment of two million pounds sterling. The terms were refused, and hostilities recommenced. The Burmese army concentrated round Prome. An unsuccessful sortie, which was repulsed with heavy loss, gave the Burmese hope. The main body of the native army was very strongly placed on the heights about ten miles north of the city. This position was carried by assault, and the British army and flotilla moved up the river to Myede. Negotiations for peace were again entered into, but the Burmese made no reply to the terms offered, so Malwen, which was under the command of the Queen's brother, was stormed and taken, and the victorious British forces pressed steadily on.

Dr. Price, an American missionary, who had been put in

chains and kept in close confinement with other European prisoners from the time the British landed, was released, and sent by the Burmese Government to ascertain the ultimatum of the British. Sir Archibald Campbell agreed to halt at Pagahn and await the signing of the treaty; but the war party at Ava still clamoured for war. An army of 30,000 men was hastily collected and sent down the river under an obscure commander. He took up his position in the ancient capital of Pagahn, and was routed by General Campbell, who had under him a force of only about 2,600 men. Assembling his forces, the British General then proceeded to Yandabo, four marches from Ava. Here the missionaries Price and Judson came to meet him, accompanied by the chief Wungyee and Atwenwoon, who brought one-fourth of the million sterling war indemnity.

A.D. 1826. Two days later, February 24, 1826, the treaty of Yandabo was signed, by which Assam, Arakan, and the coast of Tenasserim, including the portion of Martaban lying east of the Salwen river, were ceded to the British Government, and the King of Burma undertook not to interfere in Kachar, Jyntea, and Manipur. Sir Archibald Campbell then withdrew his army to Rangoon, where he waited till the second instalment of the war indemnity was paid. Maulmain was founded by him near to the ancient city of Martaban, and has since become a prosperous port.

Thus ended the first Burmese war, which was the beginning of changes which profoundly influenced the Burmese race and nation. Never in the long history of Burma had the Burmans been so thoroughly beaten. They had thought that their armies were invincible and their courage indisputable, but they had deserted their stockades before the British guns, and had allowed the hated white man to march almost up to the walls of their capital. It must, however, be remembered in defence of the Burmese soldier, that he had no chance

against the superior firearms and discipline of the British troops. He was generally armed with some old and obsolete musket which had been discarded from European arsenals; his gunpowder was of the worst, and his knowledge of musketry practically *nil*. He was, in fact, usually a peasant forced into active service before he had been drilled or even properly armed.

The national pride had been deeply wounded; but if Burma, following the wise example of Japan, had determined, even after her severe defeat, to learn the art of military and naval self-defence from Europe, she would have probably remained an Oriental power to this day. But the Burmese kings would learn nothing from misfortune. Surrounding themselves with a haughty reserve, they thought by bombastic talk and an arrogant assumption of greatness to preserve their regal state.

The Burmese people, however, adopted a different course. They had suffered severely from their rulers and the constant exactions of the tax-collector. The enormous demands made upon the male population to provide labour for royal "works of merit," and soldiers for the army, had so impoverished a country abounding in natural wealth, that the fall of the dynasty of Alompra was not regarded as an unmixed evil. The Peguans had been especially conciliated by the invaders; and the withdrawal of the British army, which was regarded by these people as a protection against the exactions of their Burmese governors, was felt as a calamity, and deplored in terms of clamorous regret, for, as they graphically put it, "the Inglee rajas pay for everything, and do not cut off our heads." Mr. Crawfurd speaks constantly of the kindly and respectful reception given him by the Burmese people. "Joy at the return of peace, and a deprecation of all war, seemed," he says, "to be the universal feeling of the lower classes throughout the country."

The year after the war, Mr. John Crawfurd was sent to Ava as an envoy from the Governor-General of India, and obtained certain concessions in a treaty of commerce. He was treated, however, with much haughtiness by the King and his ministers, and a determination was shown to intimate by vexatious court etiquette that the Burmese "King of the White Elephants" was superior to the Governor-General of India.

Though, after the loss of Tenasserim and Arakan, an immense territory was left under the rule of the King of Burma, he was so deeply discouraged by the defeat of his troops by British arms, that he lost the gaiety and *bonhommie* of which travellers have told, and became morose and melancholic. He was deposed, in 1837, by his brother Tharawaddy, who then ascended the throne.

Seven years before, Colonel Burney had been appointed Resident, and had exercised a humanising and civilising influence over the King; but with the accession of Tharawaddy to power, Ava was given up to lawlessness and dissoluteness, and Burney, finding he only exposed his Government to insult, withdrew to Rangoon.

CHAPTER XXXVI

SECOND BURMESE WAR AND THE ANNEXATION OF PEGU

(1837 TO 1856)

KING THARAWADDY openly declared the nullity of the Treaty of Yandabo, and behaved with the outrageous cruelty and the insolent arrogance of a barbarous tyrant. Colonel Benson was sent to Amaurapoora as Resident in 1838, but was treated with such insolence and indignity that he was obliged to return to Bengal, firmly convinced in his mind that the King of Burma must receive another lesson from the cannon's mouth before being brought to reason. Captain Macleod was left as deputy; but being housed, as a mark of contempt, in a house flooded by the river in the rainy season, he withdrew to Rangoon, and finally left Burma in 1840. From this time till 1852 there were no official relations between the British and the Burmese Governments. King Tharawaddy reigned unmolested by the humane efforts and wise counsels of British Residents, and he pursued his course of savage cruelties and barbarous tyrannies unchecked. When we read of his delight in murder, his invention of tortures, and his slaying of men with his own hand, we are reminded of King Mtesa of Uganda. Finally, insanity developed itself, and King Tharawaddy was secured and put under restraint. He died in 1846, and his son, Pagan Men, ascended the throne.

Pagan Men began his reign by making a holocaust, to the number of about a hundred persons, of his brother, with his family and all his household, and he devoted himself henceforth to gambling, cock-fighting, and debauchery. Nothing A.D. 1846.

can exceed the outrages and violence, the barbarities and heinous cruelties, the tortures and murders, the lawlessness and insurrections, which disgraced the reign of Pagan Men. At last the people, sickened at the sight of murder and rapine, rose in revolt, and put the King's brother, Mindohn Min, on the throne in 1853.

In the meanwhile the excesses of Pagan Men and his robber ministers, the disregard of all treaty obligations, and the arrogance and insolence of Burmese officials, had plunged the country once more into war with England. The British merchants at Rangoon had been subjected to most irritating exactions, and two British captains of vessels had been placed in the stocks by the governor of Rangoon and fined Rs.900. Redress was demanded by the Governor-General of India, and Commodore Lambert was sent in command of Her Majesty's ships to Rangoon, whence a letter was despatched to the King of Burma, in which the removal of the truculent governor of Rangoon was demanded. A cautious reply was received from the King, but it was delivered to Commodore Lambert by the hand of a very humble official as a sign of disrespect. The Governor of Rangoon was, however, recalled, and a Viceroy of the King was sent down the river from Ava with great state. A deputation of officers was at once despatched by the Commodore to the Viceroy with a communication on behalf of the British Government. The officers were refused admittance, kept standing in the sun for hours, and treated with marked rudeness. An apology was demanded for this insult to the British flag and was refused. The Commodore consequently seized the King's ship as an act of reprisal. The British, American, and foreign residents, claiming the protection of the British flag, crowded with all haste into the steamer *Proserpine* and sailed for Maulmain. The British warships dropped down the river.

All was confusion in Rangoon. Armed Burmese men

paraded the streets, and war-talk was loud and bombastic. Efforts were, however, made by unaccredited persons to obtain peace, and the Governor of Dalla came in person and begged the Commodore to overlook the insult; but this officer insisted that the Viceroy should himself apologise. Instead of which, the Viceroy gave notice in writing that: "If the Commodore attempt to pass the two stockades which have been erected down the river, he would be fired upon." In reply, Commodore Lambert declared the rivers of Rangoon, the Bassein, and the Salwen above Maulmain to be in a state of blockade.

Thus began the second Burmese war. The stockades were engaged on the 9th of January, and after some severe cannonading, Commodore Lambert sailed for Calcutta to obtain instructions.

An ultimatum was given to the Burmese King by the Government of India, which demanded that a written apology should be sent for the insult to the British officers; that Captains Shepherd and Lewis (the original complainants), should have Rs.900 paid them as compensation, and that an agent should be received at Rangoon, as agreed to under the treaty of Yandabo. On a favourable reply being received the Government of India undertook to send an envoy for the adjustment of differences and to restore the King's ship. None of the terms offered being agreed to, and no apology being tendered, war was formally declared.

In the minute which was published by Lord Dalhousie, he solemnly declared his conviction that war was inevitable, for he says, "Among all the nations of the East, none is more arrogant in its pretensions of superiority, and none more pertinacious in its assertion of them, than the people of Burma. With them forms are essential substance, and the method of communication and the style of address are not words but acts;" hence "the ignominy inflicted on the British

officers, if it be not resented, will be, and must be, regarded as the humiliation of the power in every sense. The insult has been persisted in to the last;" and he further argues, "The British power in India cannot safely afford to exhibit even a temporary appearance of inferiority."

An expeditionary force of considerable strength was rapidly prepared at Calcutta and Madras, and despatched to Burma
A.D. 1852. in April 1852. Martaban was first stormed and taken, and the fleet then moved up the Rangoon river.

The Burmese army was strongly entrenched behind stockades on the hill and platform of the Pagoda. On April 11th, Rangoon, and also Dalla on the other side of the river, were cannonaded from the British warships, and the stockades and town set on fire. The next day the fortifications of the Pagoda platform were taken by assault at the point of the bayonet. The Burmese had expected the English to attack from the south side, which was very strongly fortified with stockades and guns, but a storming party led by Captain Latter made a rush up the long flight of steps on the east side, which was left unprotected. The Burmese soldiers, who were said to number 20,000, startled at this unexpected rush, fled precipitately, and the Shway Dagohn, with all the guns and ammunition of the great stockade, fell into the hands of the British.

The fall of the Shway Dagohn struck the knell of the Burmese nation.

Speaking of the guns of the Burmese which fell into the hands of the English, Colonel Lawrie says, "About their artillery there hovered a rude science, civilisation struggling with ignorance, crudities seeking shape and organisation." This description aptly represents the state of the Burmese nation at the time.

Cholera and sunstroke now began to play havoc among the British troops. On the 19th of May Bassein was taken in a spirited attack, after an obstinate defence behind fortifications

which are stated by General Godwin in his despatch to have been scientifically built. The taking of Bassein was looked upon as a very important step. From the care expended on the fortifications, it was believed that the king intended to make Bassein the port of commerce if Rangoon were permanently lost; to be used also as a fort with which to overawe the Peguan population, who showed now, as in the first war, a decided inclination to be friends with the British, and a desire to place themselves under their protection. In reviewing the conquest of Burma this point must not be lost sight of, and it must be borne in mind that the Peguans were a conquered people, fretting always under the exactions and tyrannies of their Burmese masters.

With the fortress of the Shway Dagohn in the hands of an enemy, in whose justice and fair dealing the people began gradually to have confidence, Rangoon soon became crowded with natives who returned to their homes with their families and goods. By the end of June the city contained over 60,000 inhabitants; a large market was established, at which women held the stalls without fear; hospitals were organised, a theatre was opened, missionaries held religious services under the shadow of the Pagoda, and Captain Latter administered justice as Magistrate of the city.

The support of the Peguans was a very important factor in the war, and was strikingly shown at the capture of Pegu, the ancient capital of the Talaings. Soon after the fall of Rangoon the Peguans rose against the Burmese. A British expedition left Rangoon for Pegu on June 2nd. All the way up the river the villagers turned out *en masse*, cheered the invaders and waved their hands towards the city. On approaching Pegu, some slight resistance was made by a Burmese force, which was routed. The city was taken with the loss of one European soldier killed. Pegu was, however, not then occupied by the British, but was handed over to the Talaings.

Prome next became the centre of interest. An expedition was sent up the river in steamers, with the result that Prome was occupied for one day, and the Burmese guns, state-barges, and standard fell into the hands of the enemy. As the policy of the Indian Government regarding annexation was not yet defined, the flotilla withdrew from Prome and returned to Rangoon, awaiting instructions. The great natural wealth of the delta of the Irrawaddy, its inexhaustible forests of teak, its fertile soil, its noble rivers, and the obvious friendliness of its population, were given as cogent reasons for annexation, and Providence was boldly stated to have ordained that the East Indian Government should "go forth conquering and to conquer."

Towards the end of July, Lord Dalhousie, the Governor-General, visited Rangoon, but no plan of action was decided upon. On the 5th of September orders were given to renew active operations on the 18th, and to advance on Prome. By the 25th General Godwin, his staff, and the troops had embarked. On the 9th of October Prome was reached. Under the protection of the guns from the ships the troops were landed the same evening. The next morning the citadel of the Pagoda was taken possession of, the Burmese having vacated it in the night, without making an attempt at defence. They seemed to think it useless to contend against the big ordnance of the warships; the quiet assault of the white soldiers, bayonet in hand, was also too great a test for troops, who trusted to the protection of their stockades, and who had never, in the course of their long warlike history, been accustomed to contend with the disciplined soldiers and the superior firearms of Europe.

The Burmese did not, however, give up Prome without making some effort, and on December 8th they made a daring night-attack on the city. The chiefs, distinguished by their gilt helmets, were seen riding boldly in the advance. They were repulsed by Sir John Cheape.

The Burmese made a much better display of bravery and military genius at the siege of Pegu. In June, Pegu had been taken, as already told, without a struggle, and with the obvious sympathy of the Peguans, and had been handed over to them, General Godwin not being able at the time to afford troops to hold it. The Burmese had subsequently again obtained possession of the town, and it became necessary to wrest it from them. Troops were despatched for this purpose in the middle of November, and after a sharp fight the platform of the Pagoda, situated on a height in the centre of the town, was seized. General Godwin then withdrew, and left a small force under Major Hill to garrison the Pagoda. A fortnight later Pegu was surrounded by 11,000 Burmese soldiers. The attack was most persistent, but the defence made by the little garrison was equally gallant. The latter was greatly embarrassed by the presence of 2000 refugee Talaings, chiefly women and children, who claimed the protection of the British. The men of the party took part in garrison duties, and were treated as allies. The Burmese took possession of heights and pagoda spires, and kept up a constant fire. A relieving column was despatched from Rangoon under General Godwin, and after some sharp brushes with the Burmese the British garrison at Pegu was relieved on December 17th.

With the fall of Pegu ended the last struggle made by A.D. 1853. the Burmese to retain possession of the ancient kingdom of the Talaings. In January 1853, Captain Phayre arrived at Rangoon with the proclamation of the Governor-General of India annexing Pegu to the British dominions in the East. From the upper terrace of the Shway Dagohn a royal salute was fired, and the ancient country of Pegu was annexed to the British crown.

No treaty was ever signed by the King ceding the province of Pegu to the British, the King, Mindohn Min, having a strong objection to go down to posterity in the chronicles of Burma as

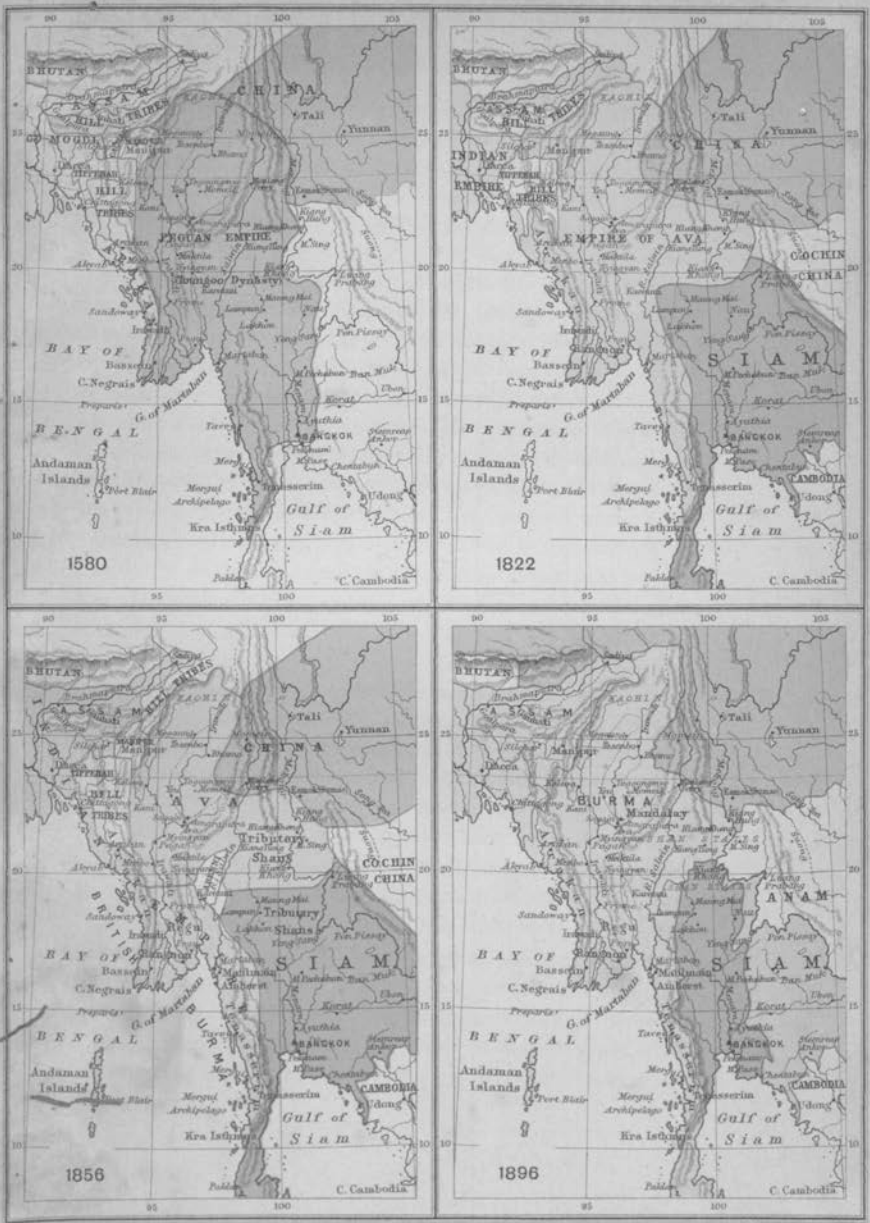
the King who had signed away part of his kingdom. Finding it impossible, therefore, to obtain a treaty, Lord Dalhousie drew a line across the map of Burma at longitude 19°, and all south of this line became British. Posts were put up to mark the boundary, and a garrison was kept at Thayetmyo, the frontier town.

A glance at the historical maps of Burma will show that by the second Burmese war England obtained the whole of the coast-line of the ancient kingdom of Burma from Chittagong to Tavoy, and control of the estuaries of the Irrawaddy, Salwen, and Sitang rivers. Burma was shut up in the watershed of the Upper Irrawaddy, and had no access to the sea except through British territory. The same series of maps graphically illustrates the successive encroachments made by Great Britain on Burmese territory. The second Burmese war gave to the British crown one of the richest provinces in the East, and a coast of exceptional advantages for trade. The loss of the rich lands of the delta, and of the outlets to the sea by the great arterial rivers of Burma, gave the death-blow to the once powerful empire of Burma.

With the proclamation of the annexation the war was not, however, quite over, for though the regular troops of the King of Burma had been defeated, there remained the irregular army of dacoits to be subdued before peace could be established.

In a country ruled over by a monarch who had encouraged disorder, and who had gathered around the throne desperadoes of every kind, it is not surprising that bands of marauders or dacoits roamed the country unchecked, and were alike the foe of peaceful native villagers and of foreign soldiers. Among these dacoits, two chiefs, Myat-htoon and Shway-Ban, had become notorious and powerful, and were said to control a force of 70,000 irregular troops. Myat-htoon had entrenched himself in a fortress at Donabyu on the Irrawaddy, from which it was determined to dislodge him. Sir John Cheape left

HISTORICAL MAPS OF BURMA
FROM 1580 TO 1896



The Edinburgh Geographical Institute

English Miles

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John Bartholomew & Co.

Prome in January 1853 with a force of 1000 men, and after a most exhausting march through the jungle, in which the troops were constantly exposed to the bullets of a hidden foe, and were decimated by cholera, the strongly defended fortress of the robber-chief was taken by assault. This was one of the most brilliant engagements in the war. Under the walls of Donabyu, Ensign, now Lord Wolseley, was wounded. Myat-htoon escaped, but his fastness was destroyed. In evidence of the terror in which he had held the country, 900 boats, crowded with people, came out of hiding in the creeks and put themselves under the protection of the English.

British arms had conquered Pegu; it now remained for British government to give peace, order, and prosperity to a country which had for centuries been distracted by misgovernment and ravaged by civil war.

THE CHEROOT BOX OF A PRINCESS.

THE KING MINDOHN MIN.

CHAPTER XXXVII

THE THIRD BURMESE WAR AND THE FALL OF MANDALAY

(1852–1885)

THE rule of King Mindohn was mild and just and his reign peaceful. In 1855 a Burmese mission was sent to Calcutta to ask for the restoration of the province of Pegu; to receive this reply from Lord Dalhousie, "So long as the sun shines in the heavens, so long will the British flag wave over Pegu." Missions from the Indian Government were sent to Ava in 1862 and 1867, and were received with marked respect and all honour by the King, who expressed his earnest desire

to be friends with the English. A treaty of commerce was obtained in 1867, and a British Resident was received at the Burmese court. A considerable trade sprung up between Upper and Lower Burma, and there seemed every probability that, with a little patience and tact, permanent and cordial relations would be established between the British and the Burmese Governments. A.D. 1867.

In 1865 the beautiful city of Amaurapoora was abandoned, and a new royal city was built at Mandalay.

In British Burma much difficulty was experienced, after the conclusion of the war, in putting down dacoity. The beneficial results, however, of a strong government were soon seen in the growth of the cities of Rangoon, Maulmain, and Bassein, in the increase of population in the provinces of Arakan, Tenasserim, and Pegu, and in the prosperity and content of the people.

King Mindohn appointed his brother as heir to the crown, and placed his numerous sons under their uncle's control. He succeeded in exciting their hatred and jealousy, and an insurrection was planned against him by his nephews. He was seized while sitting in the Hlwot-daw and killed on the spot. His son fled, and put himself at the head of a band of adherents; but finding that his cause was hopeless, he surrendered to the King, and was executed in Mandalay. After this Mindohn Min refused to appoint any one of his sons his heir, and he died in 1878 without having nominated his successor, though it was believed that he wished his son Nyoung-Yan to come to the throne.

King Mindohn told General Fytche, when he was envoy at his court, that at his death the claimants for the throne would create civil war, which would seriously affect British Burma. To prevent this catastrophe if possible, he sent for his sons when he was on his deathbed, bade them be friends and not quarrel, and depart at once for the districts which they governed.

The chief queen, a woman of the royal Alompra race and of great ambition, had no son, but was the mother of two daughters. Foreseeing that at the King's death she would be excluded from power, she devised and carried out a bold plot. She had the sons of the dying King arrested and detained in the palace, and on Mindohn Min's death she schemed to secure the crown for her daughter Supayah Lat, and to this end arranged that she should marry her half-brother, Prince Theebaw, one of the youngest of the King's sons, and who was at the time a novice in a monastery. Theebaw was selected because he was not of royal birth on his mother's side; indeed, his legitimacy was even suspected, and as he was therefore under a cloud, and moreover a recluse, it was believed that he would prove a pliant instrument in the hands of the two ruthless queens. The conspiracy succeeded. Theebaw became King, with Supayah Lat as his queen. The other sons and relatives of King Mindohn were kept in confinement, and a month or two after Theebaw and Supayah Lat had placed the crown of Burma on their heads, the two queens insisted that King Theebaw's throne was not safe, nor the lives of the three guilty conspirators secure, so long as the sons of the late King were kept alive. Urged by the imperious queens, the Hlwot-daw gave the order for the execution of the princes, and in three days the bloody command was carried out within the stockade of the palace. Forty[1] princes and princesses were butchered in cold blood, and the surviving princesses were thrown into prison. It is said that the eldest son of the King met his death heroically. Turning to his brother, who was begging for life, he said, "My brother, it is not becoming to beg for life; we must die, for it is the custom. Had you been made King you would have given the same order. Let us die since it is fated

[1] The number is put by some at seventy, and even eighty. Grattan Geary, who received his information direct from the princesses who survived, states it was forty.

THE APARTMENTS OF QUEEN SUPAYAH LAT, NOW THE ENGLISH-CLUB AT MANDALAY.

Shan state of Toung-kiang, and the hope was nourished that, by the assistance of the King of Burma, the rich trade of Yunnan could be controlled. While the British Resident left Mandalay, the French Consul, M. Haas, stayed, and he presently obtained so much influence that he was commissioned to submit the following proposals to his Government: namely, the construction of a railway from the frontier to Mandalay, at the joint expense of the French Government and a company, the line to become the property of the Burmese Government at the end of seventy years; the payment of the interest to be secured by the hypothecation of the river customs and the earth-oil of the kingdom. Also the establishment of a French bank, to be managed by a syndicate of French and Burmese officials, which should issue notes and have the control of the ruby mines and the monopoly of pickled tea. If these proposals had been carried out, they would have given the French Government full control over the principal sources of revenue in Upper Burma; the trade by steamers or boats on the Irrawaddy; the only railway line in Upper Burma in direct communication with French territory, and the only route open for traffic between British ports and Western China.

Mr. (now Sir T.) Bernard, who was then Chief Commissioner for British Burma, is a man of wide sympathy, but also of clear insight. His sympathy with the Burmese led him to respect their desire to maintain their country intact and their kingdom as Burmese; at the same time he foresaw that, if the proposed arrangements with France were carried out, they would make France and French influence dominant in Mandalay, and would in the end extrude British trade from the valley of the Irrawaddy, the consequences of which would be disastrous to British interests in Lower Burma. "If Upper Burma," he declared, "were practically under a French Protectorate, with its only or chief access to the sea across a

British railway or along a British river, there would be the probability of frequent differences between English and French officials on both sides of the Ava border, and these differences might any day become serious. The French, if established in Ava, would attempt to get other European nations to join them in (as it were) neutralising Ava, and making the Irrawaddy river open to vessels of all the world, on some such footing as the Danube now is."

Theoretically Mr. Bernard was against the policy of annexation, but he was nevertheless of the opinion that unless the Burmese Government repudiated their alliance with France, the policy of non-intervention in the affairs of Upper Burma must be exchanged for one of active interference, resulting probably in annexation. Reference was made to the French Government to ascertain if they gave support to the acts and proposals of their agent, M. Haas. In the meantime events happened which precipitated the catastrophe. The Meingoon Prince attempted to get up an insurrection against the King. The attempt failed, and his adherents were imprisoned in Mandalay. A revolt in the gaol was put down by the wholesale massacre of its inmates. This second resort to massacre increased apprehension and the sense of insecurity.

Then came the notorious Bombay-Burma incident. King Mindohn had given a trading body, called the Bombay-Burma Company, the monopoly of the teak forests in Upper Burma, a royalty being paid the King on the logs passed down the river. It was alleged that the Company had defrauded the King, and that large logs had been passed down as small, and the royalty had not been paid on them according to contract. The Hlwot-daw discussed the case, and gave judgment against the Company, inflicting a fine of double the royalty alleged to be due, amounting altogether to twenty-three lakhs of rupees, nearly a quarter of a million sterling. The fine was fixed at such an impossible figure by the Kinwoon Mingyee, a friend

A MINISTER OF KING THEEBAW.

of the Company, with the truly Oriental object of not getting it paid. There is little doubt that the Bombay-Burma Company could have settled their commercial differences with King Theebaw and his ministers unaided, and it was no more in their interests for this quarrel to be made a matter of State, than it is usual for the Government to interfere in trade disputes. But an excuse was desired for action, and when it was reported in Rangoon that a French syndicate was ready to take over the business of the Bombay-Burma Company, indignation ran high, and the war-fever broke out with intensity. The British forces were collected at the frontier ready for emergencies. At the same time the reply was received from M. De Freycinet that France did not desire political predominance in Burma, and declared that English influence in Burma would not be questioned by the Government of the Republic. An ultimatum was, therefore, immediately prepared and sent to King Theebaw, and he was given only four days to consider it, and agree to or refuse the conditions imposed. These were to receive a British Resident at Mandalay, to give protection to foreign traders, and to submit the King's foreign policy to the Government of India.

A council, in which Queen Supayah Lat took part, was held at Mandalay to consider the ultimatum of the Chief Commissioner. The Kinwoon Mingyee, or Secretary for Foreign Affairs, who had been in Europe, and knew the danger of provoking the English, counselled moderation, and deprecated any attempt to fight them as folly. The Queen was incensed at this, derided the minister as an old woman only fit to wear the tamein, and turned to the Tyndah for advice. The War Minister, anxious to preserve his power and his head, was in favour of showing a firm front to the British and rejecting the ultimatum. A letter was accordingly drafted and sent to the commander at the frontier, giving a refusal to the demands of the Indian Government.

Meantime, without waiting for the reply to the ultimatum, troops had been despatched from India to Rangoon, and were massed at Thayetmyo on the frontier, and General Prendergast found himself at the head of a well-organised force of 11,000 men, supplied with a flotilla of flat-bottomed boats, with elephant batteries, and all the paraphernalia for carrying war into an Oriental country. His orders were to cross the frontier and invade Upper Burma the day after the reply to the ultimatum was received, if a refusal to the British demands was given. This was accordingly done.

The opposition made by the Burmese army was feeble in the extreme. No resistance was made till the British forces reached Minelah, below Pagahn, on November 17th. A hill on the east bank of the Irrawaddy had been fortified by Italian engineers. The fort was strongly entrenched on the river side, but had been left undefended on the land side; the forts both at Minelah and at Gwe Goung Kamyo were taken by the Bengal and Madras regiments after about three hours' fighting. Minlakwa, "the Royal Hand," the governor and defender of Minelah, withdrew his men to Selin and prepared to fight, but he received a letter from the Hlwot-daw telling him the Tyndah was in power, and that he was to come to terms with the British.

The expedition continued its advance up the Irrawaddy till it reached Pagahn, where some Burmese earthworks were stormed and taken on the 22nd. Two days later the town of Myin-Gyan was captured, the Burmese forces being driven out by the cannonade from the gunboats.

At Mandalay it was never believed that the English intended to take Burma, and no attempt was made to protect the city, or even the person of the King. Theebaw had himself greater distrust of the enemy than his ministers, and wished to fly into the mountainous Shan country, where he would have better hopes of holding out against the English

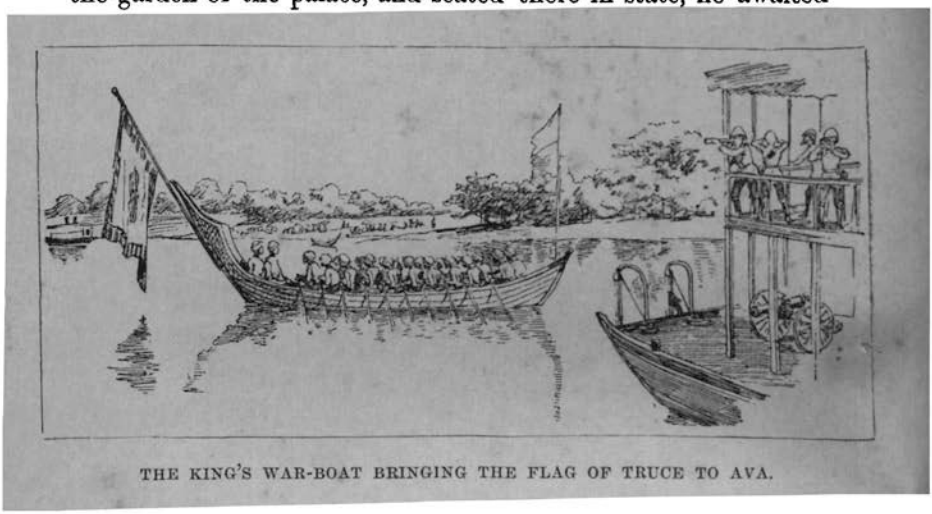
than at Mandalay. The Kinwoon and Tyndah, who played the difficult game of trying to keep in favour with two opposing powers, persuaded the King that the English were not aiming at war and conquest, but simply desired concessions to trade, and that the military force was merely sent to escort Colonel Sladen to negotiate a peace. They contended that if the King fought, he would probably be beaten and would lose his throne; on the other hand, if he did not fight, but gave the English all they demanded, he would be allowed to retain his throne with some limitations of his power. They urged therefore that the palace should be thrown open to the English general and envoy, that negotiations be entered into with them at once for the concession of a treaty, and promised that the invading army would then retire to Rangoon and all would be well.

A MEMBER OF THE HLWOT-DAW.

Dismayed and perplexed, King Theebaw took the advice of his ministers, who carefully kept the real facts from him, and he sent an envoy to General Prendergast with a flag of truce, and a letter proposing an armistice in order to negotiate a peace. The general, who doubted the genuineness of the document, returned a reply demanding the surrender of the King's army, of the city of Mandalay, and of King Theebaw in person. The Burmese royal barge returned to Mandalay and

came back the next morning with envoys, who had orders to yield to these demands. The forts of Ava, with twenty-eight guns, were at once surrendered, and the Burmese troops there laid down their arms. On the following day, November 28, 1885, Mandalay was occupied.

As the invading army neared the royal capital, the King repaired with Queen Supayah Lat to the summer-house[1] in the garden of the palace, and seated there in state, he awaited

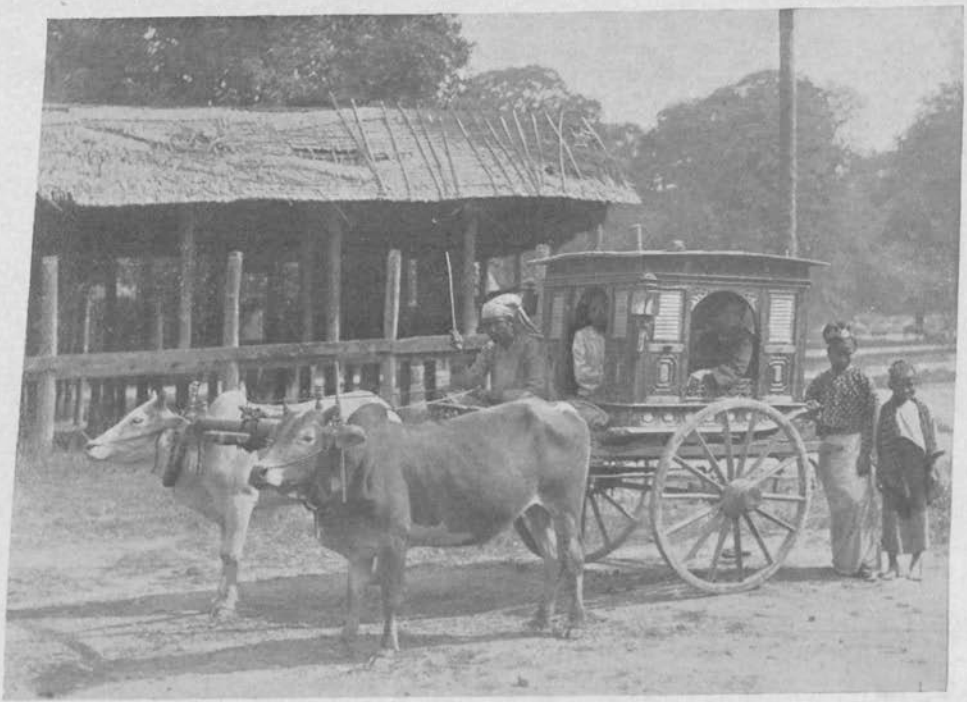


THE KING'S WAR-BOAT BRINGING THE FLAG OF TRUCE TO AVA.

the British commander. Whilst so waiting a pwé was performed by the court dancing girls to distract the King's mind, and not far off the royal elephants stood, laden with treasure, and harnessed ready for flight, should such be decided upon at the last moment. General Prendergast and his troops marched unopposed into the palace stockade, and he presented —booted and spurred and without making obeisance[2]—the

[1] I have been carefully over the ground, and had every incident described to me by a person who was present.

[2] As already stated, p. 31, the summer-house was selected as the place for this momentous interview, as by its construction the King could sit on a higher level while the English officers stood on the ground, and thus the court etiquette could be evaded of removing the boots in the presence of the King.



BULLOCK GHARRY; SIMILAR TO THAT IN WHICH KING THEEBAW WAS CONVEYED PRISONER TO THE STEAMER.

final ultimatum to the King. This required that in twenty-four hours King Theebaw should give up his crown and his kingdom, and should place himself unreservedly in the hands of the British Government.

The unexpected blow had fallen. It was now too late to think of flight and resistance, and King Theebaw was dethroned and Upper Burma conquered almost without the Burmese striking a blow.

In the night that followed Mandalay was given up to terror and lawlessness; soldiers looted, dacoits marauded, and prisoners escaped. In the gilded and wall-less palace the Queen hastily gathered her jewels together and prepared for flight; but General Prendergast was awakened by the Tyndah and warned that his royal prisoners of war would in the confusion escape. Steps were therefore at once taken to make King Theebaw and his Queen prisoners *de facto* in their own palace.

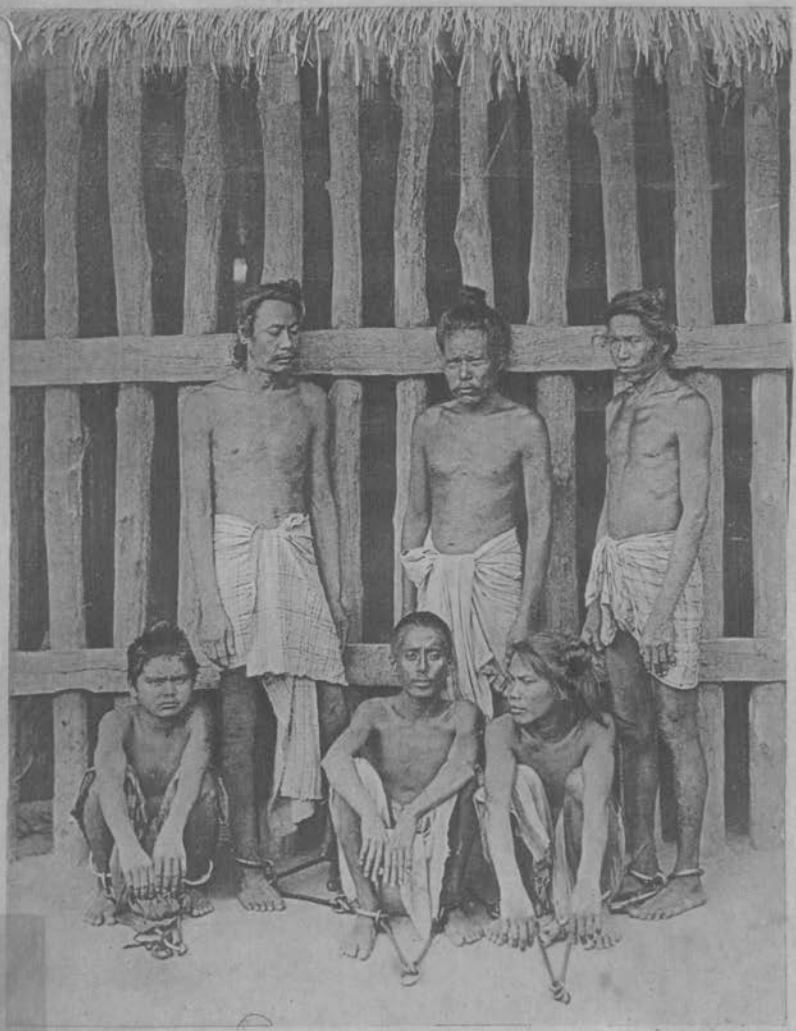
The next morning early, King Theebaw was hurried without ceremony into a bullock gharry, and Queen Supayah Lat into another, and in the presence of a great crowd of subjects, who stood by awestruck and weeping, they were conveyed to one of the steamers of the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company. Here a guard of soldiers was drawn up, and when the royal prisoners came aboard they drew their swords and presented arms. As the naked sabres flashed in the sunlight the craven King fell on his knees and cried out in terror, "They will kill me; save my life!" but Queen Supayah Lat strode on erect, with her little child clinging to her dress, dauntless and fierce to the last. The King and Queen were taken prisoners to Madras, where they have been kept in retirement ever since, and royal Mandalay and the great country of Upper Burma ~~fell into the hands of~~ the English.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

AFTER THE FALL OF THE BURMESE EMPIRE—THE DACOITS

WITH the deportation of King Theebaw, the keystone of the arch of the Government of Burma was withdrawn, and the whole fabric suddenly fell to pieces. With the loss of authority from the throne the power of the Atwen-woons and provincial Woons was gone; there was nobody to step into their places, and the whole country was deprived of Government, almost before the people had heard that their land was conquered, and their King a prisoner. The British army, large enough to take and hold Mandalay, was not sufficient for the occupation of the country; the result of which was that dacoity, which had been ill-suppressed in King Theebaw's time, again raised its head and became rampant throughout Burma. Hunger, want, and insecurity of property have always, in ill-governed countries, led to the formation of bands of marauders or freebooters; and in Burma, the disorganisation of the country was so great after the fall of King Theebaw, that a village formed a band of dacoits to rob and plunder in self-defence, as otherwise it would be robbed and plundered in its turn. "The population is reduced to extremity by hunger and by fear, and the whole country is turning to dacoity"—"the only choice left the people is that of dacoiting or being dacoited," wrote Mr. Grattan Geary, a vivacious and observant reporter of events of the moment.

Colonel Sladen, the political officer who accompanied the military expedition, was appointed British Resident Commissioner, a position equivalent to Governor of Upper Burma.



Lemercier gravure

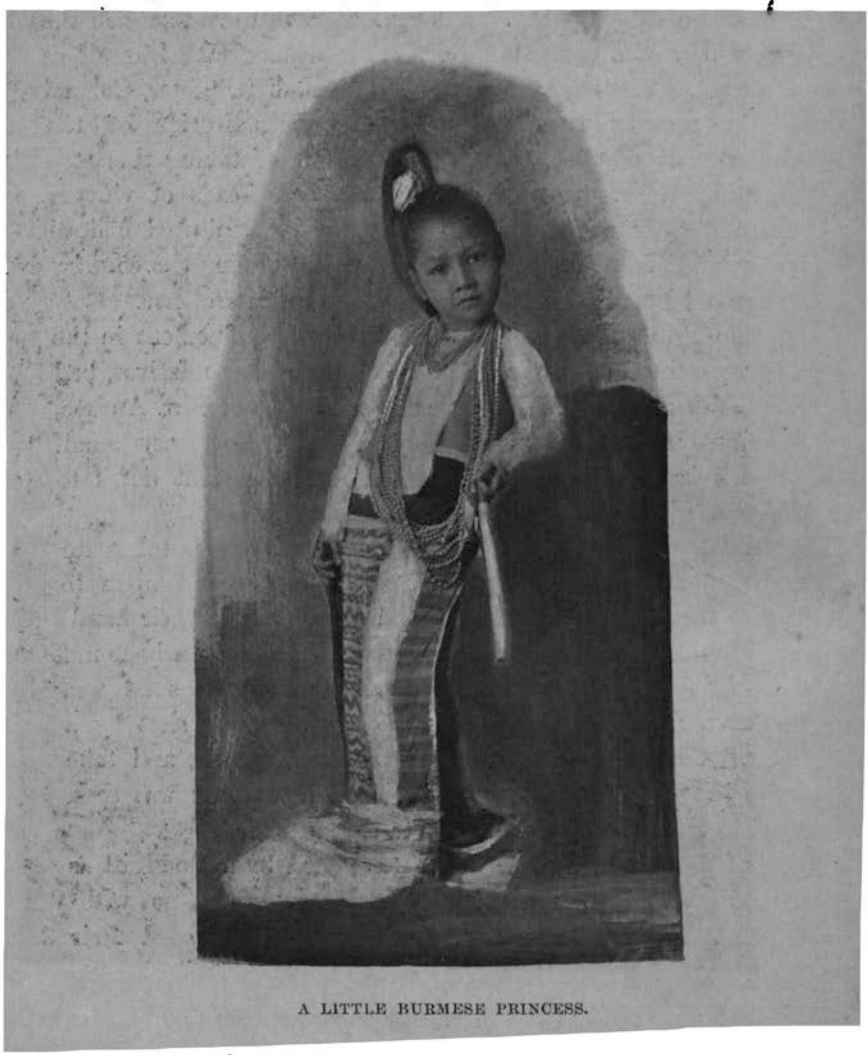
He at once devoted himself to the immense task of bringing order out of anarchy, and of reassuring the people, with whom he had much sympathy. His first act was to re-establish the Hlwot-daw as a council of Burmese ministers, with himself as president. The replacement of the Tyndah in power, Colonel Sladen considered necessary for the reconstitution of the Government of the country. The result of taking this step was that the governors of provinces and heads of villages accepted their positions anew from the reconstituted central power, and there seemed a possibility of governing the country on the old Burmese lines under British superintendence.

The Princesses who had been kept in confinement in the palace precincts since the massacre of their male relatives, had on the fall of King Theebaw fled to the house of Mrs. Andrea, who gave them a refuge. They were allowed very small pensions by the British Government, and were sent down to Rangoon, where they still live in seclusion.

Military measures of the greatest severity were taken for the suppression of dacoity. Burmans were called upon to give up their arms, and those found with guns in their hands were shot as dacoits. The Burmese villager presently found himself in this difficult position: if he had arms he was shot as a dacoit, and if he had no arms he was shot by a dacoit. Clearly it was his interest to turn dacoit, and take to the jungle. The shooting of dacoits in batches was soon found to have the opposite effect to that intended.

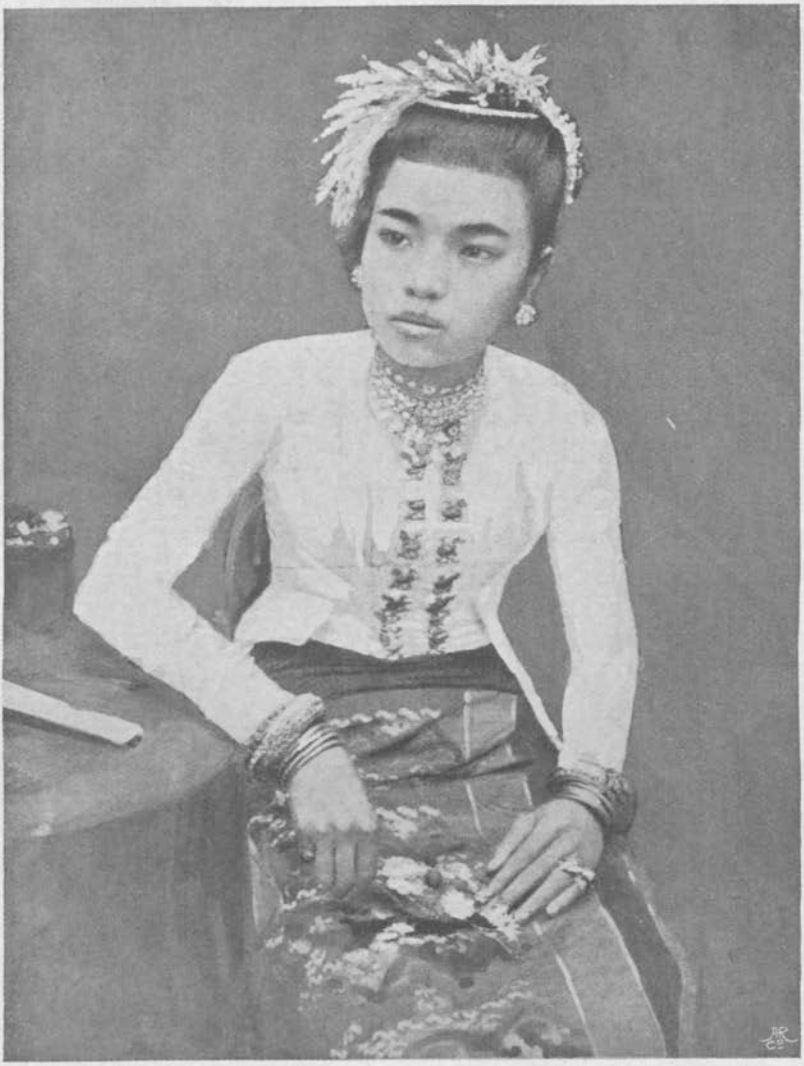
The death punishment will be accepted by a Buddhist as his fate with resignation; but the Burmese argued, not without some show of logic, that the British had invaded their country and deported their King out of horror of the "clearing away," according to national custom, of a few princes, and that they at once commenced killing a much greater number of men in cold blood on the unsupported charge of their being dacoits. A sullen spirit of national resistance arose, and the Burman

soldiers who had orders to lay down their arms at Ava, and not to fight at Mandalay, joined organised bands of dacoits,



A LITTLE BURMESE PRINCESS.

and very soon after the bloodless fall of Mandalay we found we had a guerilla war on hand.



A MAID OF HONOUR OF QUEEN SUPAYAH LAT.

Meanwhile, Mr. T. Bernard, the Chief Commissioner, arrived in Mandalay, and organised relief works of road-sweeping and road-making for the starving inhabitants. The distress among the very poor was acute, as large numbers had been accustomed to live on the King's bounty.

Having come to the conclusion that the Tyndah, who was reported to have been one of the chief actors in the royal massacres, ought not to occupy a prominent position in an Anglo-Burman Government, Mr. Bernard gave orders for his arrest and exile to India. Accordingly, while the Hlwot-daw was sitting in congress on the afternoon of December 27th, the Tyndah was arrested and taken at once on board a steamer and sent down to Rangoon. Colonel Sladen considered that the services rendered the British Government by the ex-War-Minister had been of so much value, that he strongly deprecated this step being taken. The Hlwot-daw asked in vain for the reinstatement of the Tyndah, but the Kinwoon Meingyee was restored to power at its request. Colonel Sladen's plans for the government of the country by and through the Hlwot-daw were, however, of short duration, for when the Viceroy, Lord Dufferin, visited Mandalay in the spring, the Supreme Council was suppressed, and the building in which the sittings were held was subsequently razed to the ground.

Some incidents in the execution and flogging of dacoits, notably the photographing by an officer of prisoners condemned to be shot, at the supreme moment of death, and the confession implicating Burmese ministers extracted from a prisoner on the threat of instant execution, excited so much public indignation, that on February 3rd General Prendergast issued a general order putting an end to free-handed executions. The dragon's teeth had, however, been sown, and it was long before the evil harvest was entirely reaped.

Various military expeditions were made against dacoit bands, but with very little result; the freebooters disappeared

into the jungle, from the close cover of which they could shoot and harass the British troops with impunity. They had certain advantages over our forces, inasmuch as they travelled without baggage, slept in the open air, and lived on a little rice, or the fruits of the forest. The British soldiers became exhausted and discouraged, constantly pursuing through pathless and malarious jungles a foe who was never seen, but who, like the will-o'-the-wisp, led them on one bootless and fatiguing march after another, to find, when they came up, as they supposed, to their enemies, a smoking village and the revolting signs of ruthless cruelties. For the hands of the dacoits were against everybody, and while they were playing the part of patriots, defending their country as best they could against a foreign invader, they plundered and murdered the people of their own race; a village was therefore often fain to buy the services of a dacoit band to protect it from the ravages of other marauders; hence the extreme difficulty the English officers found in extracting reliable information from the Burmese country people as to the whereabouts of notorious dacoit leaders and their bands.

As time went on the dacoits began to range themselves under the banner of two princes, cousins of King Theebaw, and they were joined by the Shan Tsaubwas, so that before the year was out it was found necessary to have no less than 40,000 British troops in Burma under General Sir Frederick Roberts.

The task of bringing the country into order; of finally conquering and dispersing the bands of dacoits, who by their cruelties forfeited the sympathy of all; of conciliating the Shan chieftains and making them our friends and allies; of establishing an elaborate and efficient system of government and the means of dispensing justice in every part of the wide extent, and often inaccessible districts, of Upper Burma; of opening up the country by railways and roads, has been a diffi-

cult one; but it has been successfully accomplished by means of that indomitable pluck when danger has to be faced, that undaunted perseverance when difficulties have to be overcome, and that unflinching sense of justice when oppressed peoples are to be governed, which have made the British the greatest colonising nation of the world, and which have given Great Britain her vast Indian Empire.

On January 1st, 1886, the following proclamation announced the annexation of Upper Burma to the Queen's dominions:

"By command of the Queen-Empress, it is hereby certified that the territories formerly governed by King Theebaw will no longer be under his rule, but have become part of Her Majesty's dominions, and will, during Her Majesty's pleasure, be administered by such officers as the Viceroy and Governor-General of India from time to time appoint."

In the following month the Viceroy, the Earl of Dufferin, accompanied by the Countess, made a state entry into Mandalay, and beneath the gilded throne of King Theebaw held a reception of officers and officials. It was then announced that the policy of annexation would be carried out in its entirety, and that the country would be at once placed under the supreme and direct administrative control of British officers. Upper Burma was thus united to Lower Burma, to be ruled as a province of the Indian Empire, and henceforth the entire country of Burma, nearly twice as large as Great Britain and Ireland, became British.

CHAPTER XXXIX

A ROYAL RACE OF HOMICIDAL MANIACS

INVESTIGATION into the causes of the misfortunes which overtook the Burmese Empire during the present century leads one irresistibly to fix the blame on the rulers of Burma, who reduced a country described by Captain Michael Symes at the end of the last century as prosperous and full of promise to a condition of destructive anarchy and extreme weakness. Further investigation into the conduct of the Kings of Burma shows that these rulers exceeded in their acts the ordinary despotism of Oriental tyrants, so that by their inhuman cruelties and insensate commands they alarmed and disgusted even their subjects, who were long accustomed to the yoke of kings who owned them absolutely as slaves. In a civilised country such acts would be looked upon either as those of criminals or of madmen—most probably the latter; and I think there is sufficient evidence to prove that the monarchs of the dynasty of Alompra degenerated into a race of homicidal maniacs, who, by occupying a position of irresponsible power, brought disaster on their country. It would not be without interest from many points of view, ethnological, political, moral, and social, to trace the gradual development of homicidal mania in the Burmese royal family, and to note its causes and consequences.

The founder of the dynasty was Alompra, a man of obscure birth, who followed the despised profession of a hunter in the village of Muthsobo, in Upper Burma. By dint of undaunted courage, unbounded self-assertion, and great force of

character, he raised himself to a position of supreme power, and not only lifted his country from a condition of dependence, but, by the conquest of Pegu, created a strong and united Burma. He died at the age of forty-six, after reigning only seven years.

That Alompra was a great man there is no means of doubting. Symes says: "Be the character of Alompra what it may, his heroic actions give him an indisputable claim to no mean rank among the most distinguished personages in the page of history. In his temper he is said to have been prone to anger, in revenge implacable, and in punishing faults remorseless and severe;" but he adds, "Alompra, whether viewed in the light of a politician or a soldier, is undoubtedly entitled to respect. The wisdom of his councils secured what his valour had acquired; he was not more eager for conquest than attentive to the improvement of his territories and the prosperity of his people."

The founder of the dynasty must be acknowledged to have been a man of great intellectual ability, and yet we can discern in him the seeds of that insanity which developed into mania in his descendants, and which might have been shown in himself had he lived longer. His overweening vanity was the sign of an ill-balanced and unrestrained mind. To Captain Baker, who was sent as envoy to obtain a treaty, he spoke as a senseless braggart. "See these arms and this thigh," he said, exposing his limbs; "amongst a thousand you will not see my match. I myself can crush a hundred such as the King of Pegu." He boasted that if all the powers of the world were to invade Burma, he could drive them out of the country; that a nine-pound shot if fired at him could not enter his body, and more to the same effect. Just before his death, when besieging Ayuthia, the capital of Siam, he declared he came not as a conqueror, but as a Buddha, to conquer by kindness and to teach the law of holiness. His pretensions were ridiculed. He raised the siege and returned home to die.

Alompra had nine sons by one wife. He was succeeded by his son Namigdoagyi, who died after reigning six years, and when still quite young. He was a religious fanatic, and is remembered for the severity of his punishments awarded to those who transgressed the Buddhist law; thus the second conviction for drunkenness incurred the inevitable penalty of death. He left an idiot child. Myedu Meng, the second son of Alompra, came to the throne. During the twelve years he reigned, he was constantly engaged in ruthless wars with China, Siam, and Manipur. At a time of public rejoicing at Rangoon he caused the old captive King of Pegu to be beheaded. He has the character of having been an austere, intelligent prince.

His son Zinguza, a boy of nineteen, succeeded him, and took to drinking and debauchery. In a sudden access of rage he accused his wife of infidelity, and without waiting to enable her to disprove the charge he sentenced her to immediate execution. She was hurried from the palace, thrust into a sack of scarlet embroidered cloth, and, in the presence of thousands of spectators, the sack was suspended between the narrow necks of two earthen jars which were perforated, and set afloat in the deepest part of the Irrawaddy. Not till the jars filled was the body immersed, and the drowning was therefore a long-drawn agony. This cruel act so incensed the people that they rose against their tyrant, and after various insurrections Bodoahpra, third son of Alompra, came to the throne. Sangermano states that Bodoahpra on his accession to the throne gave orders that his nephew should be drowned, and condemned the wives of King Zinguza to be burnt alive with their babes in their arms. He gives him the evil character of a man of cruel and inhuman disposition. In suppressing an insurrection he caused the guilty and the innocent to be slaughtered, and all the inhabitants of the village to be burnt alive on an immense pile of wood. He executed his own brother, and he threatened, when he found

his army in difficulties in Siam, to burn all his principal officers "in one fiery furnace." His thirst for blood was only equalled by his insane vanity, and the immense pagoda at Mengohn testifies to the extravagance of his ambition. Notwithstanding the crimes with which his life was stained, he aspired to be accepted as a god.

To ensure the succession to the throne of heirs of the royal blood, Bodoahpra married his eldest son to one of his daughters. The Crown-Prince died before his father. The offspring of this incestuous marriage was Hpagyidoa, who came to the throne on the death of Bodoahpra. His first act, on coming to the throne, was to cruelly put his two uncles to death. He was restless, full of childish vanity, and so violent that his ministers dared not bring a disagreeable subject before him. He would give way to sudden bursts of passion, when, for a little while, he was like a raging madman, and no one dared approach him. Gouger describes being present at a full-dress durbar, when something was said to displease the King. He rose and left the hall. Presently he reappeared with a long spear in his hand, with which his Majesty made a furious rush at his ministers, who fled pell-mell; he chased them down the steps, when the King, forgetting in his frenzy who was the delinquent, launched the spear at the flying crowd. On another occasion, a golden htee, which had been placed on the spire over the throne, was struck by lightning, at which his rage was so frantic that he insisted upon the unfortunate architect being hunted up and taken to instant execution. Yet this King was said to have been of a mild disposition and unwilling to shed blood. Before the first Burmese war, which occurred five years after his accession, his insanity was suspected; but after the loss of the province of Pegu he became melancholic, and so pronouncedly insane that he was deposed, and his brother Tharawaddy was made King.

Before his accession, Tharawaddy had been known as a rollicking, affable prince, fond of drinking and gay living; but the possession of the power of life and death seems to have awakened in him the homicidal mania of his family. The only son of the late King was put to death, together with his whole household, and revolts were suppressed by inhuman massacres. The King used to delight in killing persons with his own hand, and one of his favourite amusements was to make anybody who happened to be present kneel down with his face to the ground, when, drawing his sword, he would facetiously carve a chessboard with gashes on the unfortunate man's bare back. He would often have two or three men taken out, and have them set up to be shot at with his double-barrelled gun. He used to procure the livers of his victims, and offer them to the tutelary spirits of various trees.

In the summer of 1845 he had become so outrageous that scarcely any one dared to go near him; one of his sons succeeded in removing his weapons and putting him under restraint; the King affected recovery and returned to power; he then attempted to put his son to death, and suspecting the Governor of Rangoon of having aided his son, he speared him with his own hand. A few months later the person of the King was seized, and he was placed in confinement, and kept there till he died.

His son Pagan Men ascended the throne. The offspring of an incestuous marriage between members of a family in which homicidal mania was so marked, the new King did not belie his parentage. One of his first acts was to publicly put his half-brother with his five sons, his queen, and all her relatives to death; he made a holocaust of another brother, with his family, and all his household, to the number of about eighty or a hundred persons. Some thousands of people were put to death for fanciful reasons and to extort money, but it does not

appear that the King was fond of slaying people with his own hand like his father.

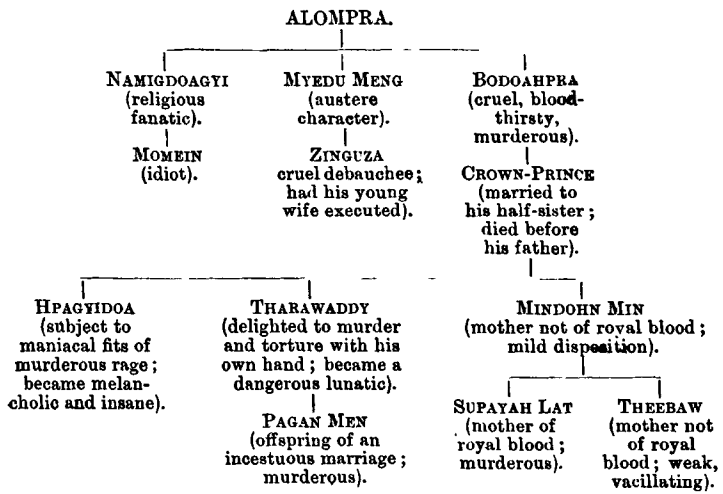
Pagan Men was deposed, and King Mindohn, a son of Tharawaddy by an inferior wife, not of royal blood, was placed on the throne. King Mindohn had the advantage of having had as his mother a woman who was not his father's half-sister, and thus of having a strain of sane blood in his veins. He was certainly the mildest and most reasonable King of the house of Alompra; he prided himself, in fact, on never having ordered an execution; but still he did not hesitate to have obnoxious persons removed. The King would simply say, "I do not wish to see that person any more," and at frequent intervals he would ask "Is he still there?" when at length he would be told that the offending person had died of chagrin at having had the sun of the royal favour withdrawn from him.

True to royal precedent, King Mindohn married his half-sisters, the daughters of the homicidal maniac Tharawaddy, in order to have heirs of pure royal blood, and in his daughter Supayah Lat the ferocious instincts of the race broke out afresh. The chief Queen had no sons, but two daughters. On the death of Mindohn Min, the Queen-dowager succeeded in marrying her daughter to Theebaw, her half-brother, a younger and insignificant son of King Mindohn, by a wife not of royal, nor even of pure Burman blood. Theebaw became a tool in the hands of his Queen and the Queen-dowager.

In order to ensure the secure possession of the throne, which had been usurped from the rightful heir, the two Queens planned and carried out within the palace the massacre of King Theebaw's brothers, sisters, and uncles; the orders being given by the Queens and carried out by the Hlwot-daw at their insistence. It was this massacre which roused the indignation of the English, and which sealed the doom of a race of kings who had ruled for a hundred and forty years,

and who had during that time given evidence of being more or less the victims of homicidal mania, which disease became markedly hereditary from the custom of marrying their half-sisters. No greater misfortune could affect a country; and Burma, owing to her murderous, vainglorious, and insane kings suffered the greatest calamities that can befall a people living under an absolute tyranny. Apart from other great benefits introduced with English rule, the entire suppression of this fatal dynasty of monarchs must not be counted the least.

The following table graphically represents the homicidal tendencies of the members of the dynasty of the pure royal blood of Alompra:—


ALOMPRA.
NAMIGDOAGYI (religious fanatic).
MOMEIN (idiot).
MYEDU MENG (austere character).
ZINGUZA cruel debauchee; had his young wife executed).
BODOAHPRA (cruel, blood-thirsty, murderous).
CROWN-PRINCE (married to his half-sister; died before his father).
HPAGYIDOA (subject to maniacal fits of murderous rage; became melancholic and insane).
THARAWADDY (delighted to murder and torture with his own hand; became a dangerous lunatic).
PAGAN MEN (offspring of an incestuous marriage; murderous).
MINDOHN MIN (mother not of royal blood; mild disposition).
SUPAYAH LAT (mother of royal blood; murderous).
THEEBAW (mother not of royal blood; weak, vacillating).

BOOK V

THE RESOURCES AND FUTURE OF BURMA

CHAPTER XL

PRODUCTS—CLIMATE—POPULATION

THE principal products of Burma are rice, rubies, and teak; but there can be no doubt that as the country is opened up by railways and developed by cultivation, the products of this land of wealth will become more varied, and the exports of still greater value.

In Lower Burma five and a half millions of acres of land are cropped, of which five millions are occupied by rice, and the other half million acres by other crops, such as food-grains, tobacco, cotton, spices, &c. Lower Burma annually exports about one and a half million tons of rice; three-quarters of a million tons to Europe and America, and half a million to India, China, and the Straits. Till within the last two or three years Upper Burma depended in a great measure for its rice on the rich paddy lands of the delta, and up to 1892 the annual supply of rice from Lower to Upper Burma was about a hundred thousand tons a year. Upper Burma is now growing nearly enough rice for her own consumption; and when I was in Burma plans were being discussed of building rice-cleaning mills near Mandalay, and tapping the rice-producing districts north of that city. Upper Burma needs a larger population and extensive clearances of the jungle before it can become a great rice-producing country, and it is doubtful if it could ever compete with Lower Burma, where the maximum of production is obtained with the minimum of labour. The indication seems at present to point to the cultivation of the crops of sub-tropical countries. Experiments

are also being made to grow apples, pears, peaches, plums, gooseberries, currants, strawberries, raspberries, and various kinds of nuts and vegetables. English fruits require, however, a great deal of care. American maize has been tried in some districts. In the southern Shan States wheat and potatoes have been successfully cultivated, and in the Chin Hills English vegetables thrive.

With the mountain tribes at peace with us and with one another, and under the control of a strong and just Government, the agricultural development of northern Burma may be very great. No one who has seen the southern slopes of the Himalayas covered up to the height of 8000 or 9000 feet with closely cultivated tea gardens, can doubt that the Chin Hills, Karennee, and the Shan States might not in a similar way, become by cultivation sources of great wealth to the country and the people, as well as to enterprising British settlers. We have, indeed, not yet begun to realise what are the undeveloped riches and the unbounded possibilities of Upper Burma.

The teak forests reserved by the Government cover an area of about 12,000 square miles. The value of the timber annually exported from Rangoon and Maulmain is from 140 to 160 lakhs of rupees. The forests also yield bamboos, cutch, and indiarubber in commercial quantities, and an attempt is being made to grow mahogany. Most of the teak exported goes to Calcutta and Bombay. There are signs that the teak forests are beginning to be worked out.

For centuries Burma has been known as the country of the ruby mines, and the wealth of the King of Burma in rubies and sapphires has always been notorious. The famous mines are situated on the very summit of the steep peaked range of mountains which lie to the north-east of Mandalay. The rubies found are of the finest quality, and often of great size; the King of Burma was said to have owned one as

large as a "pigeon's egg," and of extraordinary quality. A perfect Burmese ruby of five carats weight is worth ten times the value of a diamond the same weight, and a ruby which reaches the weight of ten carats is almost invaluable.[1] In the King's time no European was ever allowed to visit the ruby mines. All stones found over a certain weight belonged by law to the King. The mines are now worked, I was told, in a curious way. Anybody who chooses can go and work at the ruby mines, the miner setting up at his own expense all the machinery required; but if he succeeds in finding rubies, the difficulty then arises how to get them away. Around the ruby mine districts sentinels are placed by the Government; if the miner can escape their vigilance, or even if caught, if he can secrete the stones carefully enough for them not to be discovered, he can go free; but if he is taken and the rubies are found on him, he is obliged to give them up to the Government officers. I cannot vouch for the truth of this story, but it was told me as the fact by a man who dealt largely in rubies. Ten lakhs of rupees' worth of stones are said to be annually obtained at the Burmese mines. Spinels or imperfect rubies are very abundant and cheap in Burma. Burmese sapphires are much valued. Jade is also found in the Myit Kyana district.

All travellers who have for centuries past visited Burma have always spoken of the abundance of gold lavishly used in the decoration of pagodas and palaces, and it was believed that in the "golden land" gold was a natural product. Whether this is so is still a debated point. The exportation of gold or bullion out of the country was absolutely forbidden by the Burmese kings; hence one of the extreme difficulties of trading with the country. Gouger, in his "Prisoner in Burma," tells how in his commercial venture at Ava, before the first Burmese war, he succeeded in selling his merchandise

[1] Streeter, "Precious Stones and Gems."

and in being paid in bullion, but then came the difficulty that owing to the laws of Burma he could not remove the gold received in payment out of the country.

Various stories have been told of the finding of gold quartz of great value in the northern Shan States, and it is certainly the fact that the Burmese have from time immemorial obtained small quantities of gold by washing. Several prospecting licences and mining leases have been granted by the Government to persons seeking for gold in the Katha district, and commercial arrangements are now in progress to work what is known as the Panzit gold mine. The future will show if, as has been confidently stated, the gold fields of Upper Burma are equal to, if not better than those of Australia. Silver is said to be found in the Shan States east of the Irrawaddy, and tin mines are being worked in Mergui.

Petroleum wells situated at Nyoung-oo, not far from Pagahn, have been worked, it is stated, for over two thousand years; but other parts of the country, notably the Akyab, Pakokku, and Kyaukpyu districts, produce petroleum. According to the official report there appears to be an unfailing supply in many parts of the province, and Professor Engler reported that he had never found similar oils of the same consistency which contained such a high percentage of illuminating oil. The annual output of petroleum in Burma amounts to about eleven million gallons, to the value of from ten to eleven lakhs of rupees. Coal is known to exist both in Burma and in Shan-land, but at present only one mine, the Kabwet in the Shwebo district, is being worked, the output of which was last year only twelve thousand tons. Mica, amber, nitre, and wood-oil are also among the commercial products of Burma, and her quarries yield inexhaustible quantities of marble and alabaster.

Burma cannot at present be said to be a great manufacturing country, and the habits and sentiments of the

people are probably against it ever being so. Rice mills and saw mills form the bulk of the factories of which the Government takes cognisance; of the former there are fifty-four in number, and of the latter forty-five, all situated at or near the ports of Rangoon, Bassein, Akyab, and Maulmain. Besides these there are in Lower Burma five iron foundries, three ice factories, two printing presses, two oil works, and one cotton press. The total number of operatives employed at factory work is about 15,000.

Up to the year 1892 the trade of Burma showed a remarkable and steady increase, and rose from 486 lakhs of rupees in 1866 to 2,354 lakhs in 1892. Since then there has been some decrease, particularly in the imports, which fell in 1894–95 from 1,097 to 832 lakhs; the exports, however, reached a higher figure than they had yet done. Of the import trade 80 per cent. passes through Rangoon, and 69 per cent. of the exports are also shipped from the same port. The bulk of the exports are sent to the United Kingdom, and to Egypt, which country takes large consignments of rice. The number of vessels engaged in the sea-borne trade is maintained at a high figure, though it has shown no tendency to increase in the last few years. Between 6000 and 7000 vessels enter and clear the ports in the course of the year, of an aggregate tonnage of nearly four millions.

A considerable trade is carried on with China by way of Bhamo. This consists of specie, bullion, raw silk, silk piece goods, cotton goods, and European piece goods. The only means of transport employed in the trade with China and the Shan States are ponies, mules, pack-bullocks and carts; the routes into the Shan States are now practically safe and the country is quiet, and the Shans are turning themselves to trade with zeal.

Lower and Upper Burma have an area of about 220,000 square miles, which is about four times the extent of England

but this extensive, well-watered, and fruitful country has a population of less than eight millions. The greatest need of Burma is people. The population is, however, steadily increasing, both by immigration and from natural causes.

In parts of Burma the climate is unhealthy to Europeans; and in the forests and jungle, particularly after the rains, malaria is virulent. In the settled cities of Burma, Rangoon, Prome, and Mandalay, Europeans can with due care stand the climate better than they can in the plains of India, and it is hoped that as the country is opened up, excellent health resorts will be established in the Chin Hills and in Karennee. The rainfall varies, and in some places is excessive. At Akyab it may reach 200 inches in the year; at Prome and Mandalay it averages about 45 inches, and at Pakokku and Magwe it is below 30 inches. The mean average temperature is high, varying between 90° and 70° at Rangoon, and, with greater extremes, between 105° and 55° in Mandalay. Fever and dysentery are the most fatal diseases, and, owing to contaminated sources of water supply, cholera frequently becomes epidemic, more particularly in the Arakan division.

Railways are already carried to Pegu, Prome, and Mandalay, and the line is being extended northwards to Bhamo. When complete the Burma State railway will run for nearly one thousand miles throughout the whole extent of Burma. In March 1895, 745 miles of line were open for traffic, and great progress has been made since then. By the extension of the line to Bhamo considerable impetus will be given to the trade with China, and it is anticipated that there will be a ready demand for English manufactured goods. One can travel by rail in Burma with comfort and with perfect safety, so that intending tourists need have no anxiety on this head.

In the matter of revenue Lower Burma has long been a very profitable province, the receipts being far in excess

of expenditure. The following figures are eloquent of this fact:—

1893–94.		1894–95.	
RECEIPTS.	EXPENDITURE.	RECEIPTS.	EXPENDITURE.
Rs. 4.56,81,636	Rs. 2.86,63,243	Rs. 4.90,08,390	Rs. 2.93,54,494

In Upper Burma the figures are reversed—

1893–94.		1894–95.	
RECEIPTS.	EXPENDITURE.	RECEIPTS.	EXPENDITURE.
Rs. 1.27,76,137	Rs. 1.89,49,732	Rs. 1.37,41,940	Rs. 1.74,26,536

The difference is less in 1894–95 than in 1893–94. Lower and Upper Burma are, however, now one country under one administration, and the large excess of receipts over expenditure in the lower country can easily compensate for the deficiency of receipts in the upper country. With so large a balance in the hands of the Government, Burma can surely have everything she requires in the way of schools, technical schools, assistance to industries, roads, or railways. Hitherto the revenue from Burma has, after meeting expenditure, gone to fill the empty exchequer of India, but it is the intention of the Government to devote in future some of this surplus to Burma. A country so rich, and a people with such a genius for happiness, should be able to find delightful and original methods of using a large surplus; but also a Government, who has the care of people so various as those that inhabit Burma, many of whom have still to be civilised and educated, has ample outlets for funds.

CHAPTER XLI

THE EDUCATION OF THE BURMAN AND THE BARBARIAN

WHEN the English took possession, first of Lower and then of Upper Burma, they found monastic schools established all over the country, and every Burmese boy taught to read and write and the first simple rules of arithmetic. One of the results of the English occupation has been the establishment of an elaborate system of education, and the formation of schools of every kind in each district, so that there are now over 15,000 schools under Government inspection, with 250,000 pupils.

The schools are classified as private, monastic, primary, middle, and high schools, and they are maintained by all kinds of organisations—by the Buddhist monks, by lay Burmans, by Roman Catholic religious bodies, by the American Baptist missionaries, and by the S.P.G. At the Rangoon College and the Baptist College, about seventy students are prepared for the examinations for the F.A. and B.A. University degrees.

A school is called a public school—and can obtain grants in aid in passing its students through the examination of the different standards—which has (1.) A working session of at least four months; (2.) An average attendance of twelve pupils; (3.) At least four pupils able to read and write their vernacular by Standard II.; (4.) Passed students, after registration as a public school, by the recognised standards.

The standard was fixed low to enable the monastic schools

to obtain grants in aid, and to induce the phongyees to bring their pupils up to at least the lower levels demanded by the Education Board; indeed the most earnest endeavours have been, and are still being made by the Government to induce the Buddhist monks, who have old-established schools in their kioungs in every town and village, to take upon themselves the burden of the primary education of the people. Itinerant teachers were appointed to visit the villages and kioungs and to explain to the phongyees what was required in the way of secular education. They have met with a considerable amount of success, particularly in Upper Burma. In some places the standard of education has been raised to that demanded by Government, a large number of the monastic schools have submitted to inspection, and in 1894–95 they obtained over 20,000 primary passes for their pupils. Some of the monastic managers have submitted themselves to examination, and in some instances an abbot has shown himself keen to avail himself of the aid of Government for his schools; but in other cases, however willing the phongyees may be, the supporters of the monastery refuse to allow them the services of a lay instructor or certificated teacher, or to have anything to do with the Government officers. Many of the phongyee schools which have applied for Government grants have failed to reach the low standard demanded, and have been consequently again relegated to the class of private schools. It is nevertheless encouraging to read, in the Report of the Director of Public Instruction of Burma for the year 1894–95, such statements as the following:—"In the Hmawbi and Hlaing townships lay schools are few and poorly attended; the work consequently falls on the monastic schools, and they have responded very creditably to the demand." "U. Keitti's monastic school at Leya is one of the best in the district." "Phongyee U. Eindathap rendered great help to the deputy-inspector by going round with him to the kioungs in

the township, and explaining the object of Government in introducing secular education." "There are several promising monastic schools at Gangow." "The phongyees of Nyaung-oo and Pagahn gladly accept the advice of the officers of the Department and follow our system," and so on. It is very much to be hoped that all the phongyees will come in time to see the advantages to themselves, to their pupils, and to their country, race, and religion, in accepting the proffered aid of Government, and bringing their schools up to the required standard, thus being in the future under the new order of things, as they were in the past under the old, the great educational backbone of the country. It will be their own fault if they allow the immense power they have wielded so long, as the educationists of the youth of Burma, to pass into the hands of an alien race; but if on the other hand they add a more advanced secular education to the religious and moral teaching given in the kioungs, Burma will remain Burmese and Buddhist to the heart's core, while adopting as much of Western civilisation as is possible or well for an Oriental people to assimilate.

Burma is, however, not inhabited only by Burmans, and when the number of races living in Burma is borne in mind, it will be conceded that the task of the British Government in establishing a system of national education here has been by no means an easy one, for there are Karens, Tamils, Talaings, Kachins, Shans, Chins, Hindus, Mohamedans, and Chinese, all speaking different languages and dialects, for whom education has to be provided. It is now the rule to examine all pupils in their vernacular.

It is very much to be regretted that the education given in both aided and unaided schools should be purely literary, and not technical or manual. The desire of the Burmese schoolboy is to become a clerk, and to obtain a situation in some merchant's or Government office, and only the education

WOOD-CARVERS IN THE COURTYARD OF THE PALACE AT MANDALAY.

which fits him for this is appreciated. Thus while the country is flooded with inferior native clerks, skilled mechanics are rare, and the native arts and industries languish. The technical schools in the country are very few; there is an institute at Bassein, where bookbinding, printing, blacksmithing, mechanical engineering, drawing, and modelling are taught with satisfactory results, and the school is very popular. At Mandalay there is a technical school with about forty-five students; weaving is also taught at St. Joseph's Convent at Mandalay.

The Director of Public Instruction deeply deplores the absence of technical teaching in the country, and says—"Pupils rush to instruction almost wholly with a view to employment as clerks, and scorn any instruction directed towards the various handicrafts." The remedy must, however, lie in a great measure with the Education Department. If State aid be given to manual teaching, and if handicrafts be made part of the curriculum of the national education, and it be to the pecuniary advantage of the teachers to pass their pupils in technical as well as in literary subjects, craftsmen will be created as well as clerks, and the Oriental love of the beauty of colour and decoration will not be snuffed out by dreary poring over dusty folios, endless calculation of percentages, and the writing of voluminous letters on trivial matters.

Music, strange to say, considering how music-loving the Burmese are, is scarcely taught at all except in the Karen schools. There is also no school of art, but drawing is taught in all the municipal schools.

In higher education but little advance has been made. An Engineering College was opened in 1895, and at the railway workshops at Insein about seventy boys are taken as apprentices, half of whom are Europeans and Eurasians.

The Director of Public Instruction contends that the moral effects of the school system established by the Government are

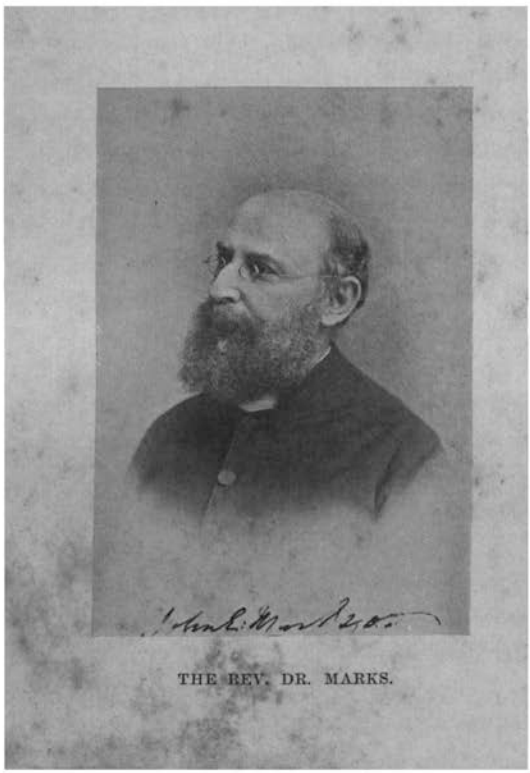
good, and says—"As to the general question of maintaining discipline and of forming the characters of pupils on healthy lines, Burma will compare favourably with India."

The missionary schools are active and prosperous. I have already spoken of the Baptist Karen school at Bassein, but no account of the educational work of the country is complete without some notice of the work done by the Rev. Dr. Marks, the S.P.G. missionary. He established a school for Burmese boys first in Mandalay in the reign of Mindohn Min, when Prince Theebaw was among his pupils. The school was afterwards transferred to Rangoon, where it has had a very successful career. Dr. Marks has passed no less than 15,000 Burmese boys through his school, where numbers of them have been prepared for the Government examinations. Dr. Marks was utterly devoted to his work, and lived with Spartan simplicity among his boys. I regret to say that his health has during the last year broken down, which has obliged him to give up active work and to retire to Maulmain.

The most remarkable educational progress made in Burma of recent years has been in the education of girls. In the olden days it was not thought necessary to educate women, but even then small private schools were opened by nuns and others, and a few girls were taught reading and writing. When the secular education of boys became general in Burma, women were much too intelligent and alert not to recognise and value the advantages such education would give them too, and to demand it. There are now 27,000 girl students in Burma, 5000 of whom are in the Government and vernacular schools for girls, about 20,000 in the boys' schools which admit girls, and 2000 in private indigenous schools. The Karens have shown more eagerness to be taught than the Burmese, and one fourth of the girls in the schools are of Karen birth.

There is no more hopeful sign in Burma than this demand of the women for education; they will probably discover better

than the men how to be at the same time pious Buddhists and educated persons, and how to combine happiness and contentment with the enlightenment of knowledge. With its women free, happy, and educated, a country cannot go very far wrong.



THE REV. DR. MARKS.

CHAPTER XLII

THE GREAT CHANGE AND THE OUTLOOK

IF my readers have followed me patiently in my attempt to realise to them the country, the people, the past history and the present condition of Burma, they will readily understand how great must be the change, which the occupation of the country by a power so dominant and a people so masterful as the English, has brought about. The Burmese, loving ease, believing in the irreversible decrees of fate as the result of accumulated karma, delighting in colour, gaiety, and fun, holding possessions to be a curse and wealth a burden, are suddenly brought face to face with a people who delight in strenuous effort, who cannot rejoice in colour and beauty even when they see them, who are grave and serious, who believe money and commerce worth making any sacrifice to obtain, and who understand above all other nations how to govern and to rule justly.

The first result of the English occupation was that the Burmese very soon felt the comfort of a good and dependable government, and they showed their appreciation of this blessing by emigrating to the provinces where it could be obtained. When the British held only Arakan and Tenasserim the persecuted Peguans emigrated over the border; when we took Pegu, the expatriated Peguans came back; but the Burmans of Upper Burma emigrated, in King Theebaw's time, in large numbers into Lower Burma. To pay taxes is always disagreeable; but to pay all that can be possibly extracted from one and yet not get good government in return, or to pay

a regular demand, and purchase thereby protection of property, justice, and education, are conditions widely different, and people are not slow, as a rule, in making their choice between the two methods of life.

The Burmese have been freed by the conquest from the oppressions of their governors or "province eaters," and the exactions of their kings; they are no longer torn from their homes and farms to give their labour on works of "royal merit," nor do they suffer any more from the cruelties and depredations of the dacoits. The country is at peace with its neighbours and with itself, and anybody can pass with safety from north to south and from east to west. But with our strong government we have introduced other things,—the desire to make money, restless striving, and earnestness. In our schools the Burman is now being taught that by competitive examination he may succeed to win a post, wherein by hard work he may earn enough money to live a sad and sober life.

The contrast between this and the old methods is very great; in the place of placid content we have given the ambition to better conditions; in the place of the belief that to possess nothing is the highest good, we are implanting the faith that to gain money is the worthy aim of endeavour; and we are naturally enforcing the British view that to strive, to succeed, and to obtain is right and lawful, in the place of the Burmese belief that to share is better than to hold, to dance happier than to work, and to be content holier than to strive. The result is that we are producing men who, though they pass our competitive examinations, cannot be depended upon to act as police or as soldiers, who easily fall victims to the temptations of opium and drink, and who lose the *insouciance* and happiness which distinguished the primitive Burmans. Peoples like persons must, however, work out their own salvation, and after a few generations of secular education the Burmese may perhaps discover, like the Japanese, how to reconcile Western

civilisation with Oriental ideas, and how, after taking the best civilisation has to offer, to remain Burmese.

Burma is not, it must be borne in mind, the country exclusively of the Burmans; in its immense area it contains races and nationalities differing widely in language, ideas, and religion, and the task the English have before them is to make of these peoples a homogeneous country. The Karens have already been rescued from barbarism, and are fast becoming one of the leading races; the Shans have been converted from freebooters to peaceful traders, and their chieftains are being taught the arts of government; the Kachins and Chins have still to be tamed. An united Burma would become a strong country, particularly as the Burmans, Karens, and Shans have shown themselves capable of education and anxious to be taught. As the Burmese are not bound by the hampering restrictions of caste, and as the women are free and respected, the national development of Burma is possible, should the people prove themselves capable of sustained effort, and their rulers permit of development on lines other than those of India. Though Burma is for the purposes of government treated as a province of India, it has little in common with India proper. The long independence of the Burmese nation, the absence of caste, the free position of the women, the ethical and non-idolatrous character of the Buddhist religion, the freedom from the thraldom of a priesthood, have combined to make Burma as distinctive in character from Hindu nationalities as is Japan. To be passed under the rule of the English, to be freed from tyranny, to be taught good government, is a happy fate for Burma. As the country improves in population, in wealth, and in education, it may in the far future recover its lost nationality, and, freed from ancient Burmese tyranny and cruelty, give the world the example of a people who know how to be happy without caring incessantly to toil, and to be joyous without desiring insatiably to possess.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

TRANSLATION OF THE INSCRIPTION ON THE BURMESE BELL (No. 15,219) IN THE INDIAN SECTION OF THE SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM.

I, the giver of the bell, the famous man, the Yaywoon Min, was staying in the sweet-smelling town of Ma-oo, of which I collect the revenue for the king, and with me was my wife, my life's breath, Meh Shway Gohn, like to the pollen of a lily, from whom I will not be separated in all the existences to come, out of which we hope soon to escape, and therefore we give praises now in order to advance in the Meggas and the Poh [the four great attainments]; we adore before the Lord Buddha that we may embark on the golden raft of the noble path which will conduct us to the final plunge into neh'ban; we two, brother and sister [commonly used for husband and wife], have given this bell as an offering to the seven precious things.

The exact weight of the bell in current reckoning is 2500 kyats weight. In this attempt to merit neh'ban our method was as follows: we took our own weight in gold and in silver, and bought copper and other metal, and mixed them well together.

In the year 1209 [1847 A.D.], in the hot season, at a fortunate hour, I had it moulded, setting my heart on giving it in alms. As I wrote this inscription I offered up abundant prayer that no enemies or troubles might come nigh me, and that I might obtain neh'ban. Then I dedicated it.

Now will I record all the alms which I gave and erected within the sacred enclosure of the pagoda, round the slender spire. I gave a tagohn-deing, the price of which, with all incidental expenses in putting up and everything, was five hundred rupees; that was the alms exactly. At the foot of the tagohn-deing I built four small pagodas, making bold to offer them in alms. In addition to these I built, outside the pagoda enclosure, a monastery and a rest-house. I, the Yaywoon Min, wished earnestly to give the greatest alms of any

in fragrant Ma-oo-myo, of which I collected the taxes. I, the Yaywoon Min, and my wife, my sons, and my daughters, the four chief parties, together with my servants and slaves, [presented these things]. I persuaded them all to give alms that they might attain to neh'ban, the deliverance; that they might prepare for themselves the way, difficult and full of swirling eddies. Let the four congregations—let men, nats, dewahs, and all creatures unite in praise. Such are all my offerings; these alms dedicated all together in order to gain merit, to rise and progress to neh'ban, to the world just before it.

May I be freed from the four states of punishment; the three great kaps, fighting, famine and plague; the eight evil places, from which a man is born blind, dumb, and otherwise crippled; from the five enemies; from unfortunate times and seasons; from bad-intentioned people—may I escape all these when I die. When new glories wake up, I will give praise in the king's palace, in the golden dwelling where the king lives; I will ponder well, and chant aloud the praise of faith. Very high, even to the skies, rises the pagoda given in alms by the Ma-oo revenue collector, the Yaywoon Minpayah, the pious founder. All men and nat-dewahs, when they behold it, will cry out eagerly in praise; they will shout thah-doo, well done, thou good and faithful servant, with united, limitless clamour.

The good that I have done in this world, all the alms that I have given, may they be for the benefit of my parents, teachers, cousins, and all my relations; all who in Zampoo-deepa are kings of the earth; all queens, their sons and daughters; nobles and all men of rank, officers and all people of the earth in the thirty-one seats of the world. All the merits I have gained, may they be shared with these. I give them and share them freely. The alms are manifest. I have given them. This good work, when I forget it (*i.e.*, in my next life), may it be counted to me in the time of the Buddha Areemadehya, when he is revealed. The friendly witnessing nats will bear testimony as they wring the water from their streaming hair.

The Great Bell at Mengohn.—While this book was passing through the press, news was received in England that the great Bell had been raised and was now swung from its supports. It would take, however, almost a battering-ram to evoke the full power of its mighty voice.

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